# THE REVIEW OF RELIGION

Volume XVIII NOVEMBER, 1953 Numbers 1-2

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*The Review of Religion* is published semi-annually. Subscriptions: $4.00 a year (foreign, $4.30); single copies $2.00 (foreign, $2.20). All subscriptions and business matters should be addressed to the publisher, Columbia University Press, 2960 Broadway, New York City. Manuscripts, editorial communications and books for review should be addressed to the Editorial Office, 401 Low Memorial Library, Columbia University, New York City.

The articles in *The Review of Religion* are indexed in the *International Index to Periodicals*, New York City, and by the *Bulletin Analytique* and the *Bulletin des Sommaires*, Paris, France.

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# PROFESSOR NILSSON'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

FREDERICK C. GRANT

*Edward Robinson Professor of Biblical Theology, Union Theological Seminary*

PROFESSOR MARTIN P. NILSSON'S *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* is without doubt the most important history of Greek religion we possess—though the author characteristically insists that the work is really not a history but only a student's handbook. The first volume was published in 1941, i.e., during the War, and was consequently unavailable in this country until long after the War had ended. (I obtained my copy in Turin, and for $27.00!) The second volume was published in 1950, and covers the Hellenistic and Roman periods, but it is not a history of Hellenistic religions, as some have assumed; it is still the history of the *Greek* religion, after the time of Plato. The new German volumes are huge in size and full of detail: the first contains 850 pages, with 52 pages of plates; the second has 738 pages, with 16 pages of plates. Fortunately, the beginner (or the student unfamiliar with German) will find the main substance of the work in two volumes available in English: *A History of Greek Religion* (1924; second edition, revised, 1948) and *Greek Piety* (1948). These should be supplemented with *Greek Popular Religion,* the lectures delivered here at Columbia University in the autumn of 1939, and the volume published the year after Vol. II of the *Geschichte,* viz., *Cults, Myths, Oracles, and Politics in Ancient Greece* (1951). It is not often that a scholar produces a whole series of works in his field of specialization in three different languages simultaneously! Nor has the series ceased. In addition to the volume on *Cults . . . and Politics,* two volumes of *Opuscula Selecta* have appeared (1951-52) with a total of 1083 pages, giving the best of Nilsson's many papers in history of religion and classical archeology; and he has also produced several more papers, e.g., "Universal Religion," published in this *Review* (XVII, 1952, pp. 5-10), and "Dionysos Liknites," in the *Bulletin* of the Royal Society of Letters at Lund (1952)—to be followed presently by an article on the Bacchic Mysteries in the Roman Age, in a forthcoming number of the *Harvard Theological Review.*

The range of Dr. Nilsson's researches and of his productive scholarship is not limited to Greek religion. His earliest works dealt with prim-

itive culture generally, e.g., with primitive time-reckoning, primitive religion, and anthropology (see his *Entstehung und religiöse Bedeutung des griechischen Kalenders,* 1918). He was especially interested in Swedish folklore, most of his work in this field, of course, being written in Swedish. But he was also concerned with the whole range of classical archeology and philology; and, ever since 1900, the date of his inaugural at Lund, he has been deeply and increasingly interested in the history of religion, chiefly of Greek religion, the field in which, amid the wide range of his manifold contributions, one may believe his chief contribution to scholarship to lie. One of his most important works is the *Griechische Feste* (1906), which contains the germs of later works—it is a book which ought to be reprinted. Following the *Entstehung . . . des griechischen Kalenders* (1918) came a series of studies, e.g., "Primitive Time-Reckoning," dealing with the background of the Greek calendar.[1]

## I

It is the purpose of this paper to point out the importance of Dr. Nilsson's contributions in this field, and to show, if possible, that his contribution to the study of the History of Religions has a bearing likewise upon biblical and theological studies, and should be taken seriously by the theologian, the teacher of religion, and even the parish minister. Nilsson himself is aware of the unhappy rift that now exists between classical studies and theology, and of the importance (for both sides) that this rift should be bridged and traffic restored—as of yore—between the two.

In the last years classical scholars and theologians seem to have parted company to a certain extent. This is to be regretted, for both strive after the same end, a history of syncretism, the preliminaries of the most important revolu-

1. In addition to the titles given above, the following may be added: *Studia de Dionysiis Atticis* (Inaugural Dissertation, Lund, 1900); *Griechische Feste von religiöser Bedeutung mit Ausschluss der attischen* (1906); *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and Its Survival in Greek Religion* (1927; second ed., revised, 1950); *The Mycenaean Origin of Greek Mythology* (Sather Classical Lectures, University of California, 1932); *Homer and Mycenae* (1933). These are simply the major works of Professor Nilsson dealing with the history of religion, chiefly with Greek religion. Many more titles could be added from his minor works, smaller books, articles and reviews. See the full bibliography (1897-1939) by Erik J. Knudtson, in *Dragma,* the Festschrift published in Nilsson's honor (Lund, 1939). A further bibliography appears at the end of *Opuscula Selecta,* II (Lund, 1952), 1062-66.

tion of the religions of the peoples of Europe, which led to the victory of Christianity. The synthesis of these studies, which are not so old as the writer of these lines, must needs comprise the paganism of the ancient world, including the Orient, as well as Christianity. These studies are in their infancy; the time is not yet ripe for such a synthesis—it must be left to our descendants. But it is a positive gain of our time to have advanced and seriously to have called attention to this surpassingly great problem in the history of Greek, Roman, and European religion.[2]

The first thing that impresses the reader of almost any book or paper by Nilsson is its "down to earth" quality. He recognizes the "social" origins of religion and also the continuing social significance of religion. For him cult is of extreme importance, of far greater importance than myth, which is secondary and (often) merely explanatory. This marks the great contrast between Nilsson's two volumes on Greek religion and the two by Gruppe that preceded them in the old edition of the *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft,* viz., *Griechische Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte* (1906), valuable as were and still are those earlier volumes. But back of cult lie earlier practices, with their beliefs, hopes, fears, and expectations rooted in man's long pre-history. (We can hardly use the term "primitive," for we do not know what that was, or when; but mankind certainly crossed the threshold of history with a whole accumulation of practices, rites, and attached meanings of one sort or another.) Moreover, the religious practices continued—and so did the attached and not always consistently thought-out meanings—long after men had become "civilized" and had developed their systems of logic and philosophy. Evidently there is a kind of thinking characteristic of early religion which does not fit wholly the later pattern of rationality—something like what Rudolf Otto described in *The Idea of the Holy,* something not contrary to logical thinking, and in fact destined to agree with it when the latter arose, but rooted in a longer past and developed vis-à-vis the total range of man's experience, not just his "religion" or his "daily business" or his craft or trade, with their demands for more logic.

All this was clear enough from the lectures on *Greek Popular Religion* and from the opening chapters of Volume I of the *Geschichte,* but it has been stated with even more clarity and explicitness in his two "Letters to Professor Nock" *(Harvard Theological Review,* XLII, 1949, 71-107, and

2. *Harvard Theological Review,* XLIV (1951), 150.

XLIV, 1951, 143-51), the former of which deals with "Some Fundamental Concepts in the Science of Religion," and the latter with "The Positive Gains in the Science of Greek Religion" during Nilsson's lifetime, and especially since 1900. Although still claiming to be an evolutionist, he repudiates as firmly as ever the assumption that the historical sequence in the development of religion must necessarily be a logical one: pre-animism (dynamism, animatism), animism, polydaemonism, polytheism, monotheism. History does not move in such strict order! But it is clear that these "earlier" stages are all related to what followed, and vice versa, and that the survivals found in historical times, i.e., in the known or recorded periods of human history, are enormously important. We have not outgrown some of them yet; perhaps the human race will never outgrow them.

One suspects that Professor Nilsson's ancestry and early surroundings had something to do with this emphasis and the understanding of religion that accompanies it. Nils Martin Persson Nilsson was born July 12, 1874, in the village of Ballingslöv, and went to school in the neighboring town of Kristianstad, both in Scania, the southernmost province of Sweden.[3] Although in close proximity to Denmark and the continent of Europe, the ancient ways have survived until recently in the hinterland. One recalls that the very soil of Sweden still bears traces of the long ages of paganism. Christianity was introduced by Bishop Ansgar in 830, but the old Teutonic paganism was still to be found in the twelfth century. As in northern and eastern Britain, and in other northern countries, a sound, hearty, independent peasantry took an early part in the political and religious history of the nation—in Sweden, for a century and more before the Reformation. And when the Reformation came (it came early—the New Testament was translated into Swedish in 1526), the initial program was to keep everything in the old church which was not contrary to scripture. The result has been that—despite ups and downs, advances and reactions—the Swedish Church has been, like the Anglican, a very conservative kind of Reformed Church, with

3. No full biography of Professor Nilsson has appeared. There is an article by Professor George Widengren, with portrait, in the Swedish Dictionary of National Biography, *Svenska Män och Kvinnor*, v, 448 f. (Stockholm, 1949). Professor Giorgio Pasquali has written an interesting biographical introduction to his translation of the first "Letter to Professor Nock," entitled *Fondamenti di Scienza delle Religioni* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1950, pp. ix-xxvi). Pasquali's Introduction ought to be translated into English.

the ancient liturgy, the ancient orders, the ancient emphasis upon worship, instruction, rite and sacrament. Indeed, these traits are rooted in the national character, if one may judge from close acquaintance with the admirable Swedish-born or -descended Americans in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, and the Dakotas. Sweden has been blessed with peace for nearly 150 years—at least it has been untouched, unravaged by the terrible destructions of war. In the midst of a prosperous, conservative, socially homogeneous and progressive people, scholarship has thrived and prospered, and has undertaken tasks impossible in countries overwhelmed with war or with preparations for war; witness the creative work of Scandinavian scholarship in other fields, for example the biblical.

Another unforgettable impression one obtains from Nilsson's work is closely related to this: it is the conception of the nature of religion as a whole, determining what shall be included and what excluded in considering its history. Here again the same soundness of view prevails. For a long time, perhaps ever since the *Aufklärung*, scholars have inclined to define religion too narrowly, too intellectually, too subjectively, in terms of philosophy, or of doctrine, or of ecclesiastical organizations or their equivalents, or even of psychological phenomena. Here in America we had the old orthodox theological definitions, followed by fresh attempts at definition based on nineteenth century "comparative religions," in turn followed by the efforts of the psychologists. For Starbuck and the older psychologists of religion, it was primarily "religious experience" in which they were interested, and this, as they understood their own term, meant conversion. Then came William James, with his classic *Varieties of Religious Experience*, in which he dealt with "prayer, guidance, and all that sort of thing immediately and privately felt, as against high and noble general views of our destiny and the world's meaning. . . . Although all the special manifestations of religion may have been absurd (I mean its creeds and theories), yet the life of it as a whole is mankind's most important function."[4] This is a perfectly

4. *Letters of William James*, II, 127. See also two references earlier in the same volume—he was getting ready to deliver the Gifford Lectures (pp. 58, 64). In the latter passage he confesses, "I mean by religion for a man *anything* that for *him* is a live hypothesis in that line, altho' it may be a dead one for anyone else." James thought himself "rather hopelessly non-evangelical" in his views, but the contrary is more likely, as we see now: his definition is too individualistic, too subjective, too far out on the fringes of the central, racial experience of religion.

legitimate definition of those phenomena of religion which specially interest the psychologist, a perfectly defensible demarcation of the area with which lectures on certain phases of religious experience are intended to deal; but as a definition of "religion" it is simply impossible, and we do the memory of William James scant honor in so misusing it. Religion involves the total phenomenon, i.e., the total range of phenomena which have been described as "religious," and we had better get on with an inclusive description rather than tarry too long for an adequate definition. And certainly, if we are dealing with ancient religion, we cannot leave out or minimize what the ancients themselves made central—Cicero for example, with his explicit definition: "religio, id est cultus deorum" *(De natura deorum,* II. 3. 8).

A further contribution of great importance is this: Nilsson's views are eclectic, based on a consideration of all the available facts, and are not dominated by some special theory which he is trying to prove. Too often the study of the history of religions has been dominated by some tangential theorem, sociological, psychological, theological, or other. It is so to this day; and it is true also of the philosophy of religion—whole areas of genuine religion and of religious experience are simply ruled out as irrelevant or insignificant in the towering dogmatic and theoretical constructions which result. Nilsson's danger is perhaps the opposite. Does he sufficiently recognize the importance of private piety and devotion? Or is his interpretation too thoroughly "sociological"? He is evidently aware of this criticism, and answers it at the end of Vol. I of the *Geschichte* (p. 797). It is certainly true that the early Greek religion was socially conditioned, was a social phenomenon, was a factor in the life of the people of Greece, suited the social needs and circumstances of the people that arose out of the amalgamation of the incoming northerners with the old Mycenaean and pre-Mycenaean population of the Hellenic peninsula. What we read in the poets and philosophers, chiefly in the fifth century dramatists, is a product of this religion—not the religion itself, certainly not the whole of it. To take it as the whole would be like taking the Psalter for the whole of Hebrew religion, or Thomas à Kempis and the breviary hymns as the whole expression of Christianity. In the second volume, the many-sided, polymorphous expressions of Greek religion, both individual and social, in the Hellenistic and Roman periods are amply recognized and expounded with deep understanding. Nilsson is in close contact with the age-old tradition of re-

ligion, pagan and pre-Christian as well as Christian, ritual as well as theological, social as well as individual, intellectual and speculative as well as following the ancient patterns of established and immemorial folkways; and he takes religion in the widest rather than the narrowest range of meaning.[5]

The whole passage is worth quoting; indeed, we ought to quote the whole conclusion to Vol. I (pp. 794-97). The following is the last paragraph:

> Now it will be objected to this account of Greek religion that it emphasizes, not faith in the gods but the dependence of the development upon social, political, and intellectual life. In reply, let it be recalled that the Greek religion, from its very origin, was bound up with social life and with the state. It did not stand over against these as an independent force—as Christianity has always done; and therefore society and the state could refuse its restraints. The development of Greek religion and religious faith was in actual fact greatly influenced by the changes which took place in social and political life, and by intellectual or spiritual movements that arose in still other areas.—It may also be objected that the higher forms of belief in the gods have been too little considered. The religion that speaks to us in Greek literature has had many and brilliant expositions. But I conceived it to be my special task to handle the hitherto somewhat neglected religion of the average man, the religion of the common people. In the last analysis it is the great mass of the common people who determine the development of a religion. They can very well prove themselves capable of grasping great religious ideas, of comprehending them, and when this takes place they carry them to victory. But to this end they must be captivated by a great religious genius. Such a genius did not arise in Greece. Plato, it is true, was a religious genius. But he himself did not know it, nor had he any desire to be a founder or a reformer of religion, but felt himself to be, as a philosopher, a seeker after truth. And what he understood himself to be, that his contemporaries understood him to be. The religious content of his thought was discovered only later, half a millennium after his death. Then he became, in fact, one of the greatest founders of religion in all history, the traces of whose influence are visible in every religion.

Finally, it is by his interpretation and elucidation of the logic of early religion, mentioned above, that Nilsson has made a great and lasting contribution to our study. In the first "Letter to Professor Nock"

5. See the review of Vol. II of the *Geschichte* by Ed. des Places, S.J., in *Biblica*, XXXII (1951), 423-27. And see Nilsson's discussion of the Christian doctrine of salvation, which remained "purely religious" in contrast to the Hermetic and Gnostic doctrine, which plunged into cosmological speculations: Fr. des Places refers to the passage, *Geschichte*, II, 661.

(1949) he deals at length with this subject. After criticizing Lévy-Bruhl, *La mentalité primitive* (Oxford, 1931), as too one-sided and exaggerated through its author's pursuit of novelty, Nilsson sets forth his own view. "The faculty of thought in primitive man," he says, "does not differ essentially from that of civilized man, but I cannot agree with the opinion of certain anthropologists that they are absolutely identical; a development from lower to higher forms has taken place." Civilized thinking is trained thinking; but at the same time what is called primitive or pre-logical mentality is "a fairly good description of the mental behaviour of most people today except in their technical or consciously intellectual activities." What is meant is the purely empirical association of thoughts, images, persons, feelings, places, or whatever gives rise to the associated or suggested experience, mental or emotional. Now the significance of this for religious history ought to be obvious at once: the whole thought of "primitive" people about the reason for, the occasion of, the effectiveness of, the process involved in such a rite as sacrifice, for example, is surely a matter of "associational thinking." The rite has been effective in the past; it was established by so-and-so; it is as natural and necessary as eating and sharing with guests or friends—not to say a family; it prepares for renewed relations with the invisible powers about and above us; it cleanses from sin; or it is necessary to be clean from sin before partaking of the sacrifice—the god will not tolerate a criminal (or even a person under taboo) in his presence; and so on. All these clustering ideas are present, at one time or another, and many besides. (See for example the keen analyses in Royden Keith Yerkes' recent book, *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman Religions and Early Judaism*, 1953.) But no theologian had arisen to put them all in articulate order, 1, 2, 3, and so on, or to subdivide them, 1a, b, c, and so on, in systematic fashion. The result was that sometimes one idea predominated, at other times some other; and the proper sequence of ideas was not certain—in fact it was not a sequence of ideas at all, in the first place. Or take the way the same type of logic applies to omens: Dr. Nilsson deals with this later on in the same "Letter" (p. 98).

One could apply it to still other, many other, phenomena of early religion. But the point I wish to make is that it applies today; it applies to theology; it applies to the exegesis of scripture (which is rooted in "primitive" religion to a far greater extent than most Protestant theologians have ever recognized); and it has a vital and direct bearing upon

religious education and the conduct of public worship—both of which presuppose far too much logical thinking, far too much intellectual preparation and training on the part of the average human being (however "civilized"). Dean Inge once remarked that "feeling is older than thought, as the heart is biologically older than the head." This is a principle that applies not only to the study of the ancient past in the history of religions, but to the whole task of practical religion today. The Catholic Church has known it for centuries, and has made constant use of the principle in its worship and teaching; Protestants are just beginning to realize its existence and importance—partly as a result of the impact of modern psychoanalysis upon pastoral psychology and theology. Artists and poets have known it, time out of mind.

One might go on and elaborate other points of far-reaching significance in the life work of this great historical scholar, with his genius for interpreting and reconstructing the long-disappeared past of religion. Instead, let me illustrate the point I have just singled out. It applies not only to the historical reconstruction of the distant past—in Hebrew as well as in Greek religion, and in many others—it applies even in the New Testament. In this "associational" logic the exact sequence of ideas is not all-important: everything does not stand or fall by the precise order in which the facts and conclusions are marshalled (as it does in a demonstration by Euclid or in systematic theology). For example, St. Luke has Jesus say of the woman in Simon's house, "Her sins . . . are forgiven, for she loved much" (Luke 7:47). Does this mean that she was forgiven *because* she loved? Or that one can *see* that she has been forgiven, since she pours out such an overflow of tender gratitude? One may accuse St. Luke of being a poor theologian (he has been so accused!) and of obscuring the proper order; but perhaps—and this is far more probable—perhaps he represents the attitude of Jesus himself. One cannot decide which comes first, divine love or human repentance, divine forgiveness or human love and gratitude. St. Augustine and others have insisted that the divine love comes first, and even the human love, even the human repentance is only a response to it. It is the divine love and forgiveness that *enables* the sinner to repent, that inspires his repentance. It is not something earned or given as a result (for example, "Be good and I will love you"), for even human love and forgiveness often precede human repentance and confession, and in fact make repentance possible. As the mediaeval theologians held, Contrition (which

is sorrow for sin inspired by love for God) is a far deeper motive in repentance than Attrition, which is merely fear of consequences (such as punishment or loss or physical pain). The distinction is clearly drawn in one of the best known hymns: "Not for the hope of gaining aught/ Not seeking a reward/But as thyself hast lovèd me/O ever-loving Lord."

It is this fresh light upon the mental processes at the heart of "primitive" religion, surviving into many of the later, more advanced stages, and never wholly abandoned, even upon the highest levels, that forms perhaps the most priceless gift of Professor Nilsson to the student of the history of religions and also to the student and teacher of present-day religion, and to the minister and preacher as well.

## II

Among Dr. Nilsson's latest writings is an 80-page essay in which he elaborates the aphorism struck off in his article in the *Review of Religion* (XVII, 1952, 7; see also *Gesch. der gr. Rel.*, II, 700), viz., that religion is a protest against the meaninglessness of events. At the instance of several scholars, during the winter of 1951-52 he collected materials in support of this thesis, and the MS was mimeographed at the Religionshistoriska Institutionen in Lund for use in Professor Ehnmark's seminar. A few copies have been circulated elsewhere, but the essay has not yet been published—as, let us hope, it eventually will be. Much of the supporting material comes from Greek religion, as is natural, but the author has taken account of other religions as well, chiefly Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism, and has also considered the protests voiced by philosophy.

The essay is in two parts, one dealing with Death, the other with Life. Nilsson does not go the length of Höffding in affirming that religion is a belief in the permanence of values—the values are too various and too inconsistent. Instead, he limits himself to the more common ground of protest against meaninglessness, which may take different forms of expression, but is still one in refusing to accept death—or the vicissitudes of life—as having no meaning, as merely accidental events in a blind, fortuitous, vacant universe, with no relation to and no concern for man. This definition of the greatest common denominator in religion is much like Professor A. D. Nock's mark of genuine religion, viz.,

"man's refusal to accept helplessness or to think that help comes from men alone" (p. 3), or even R. R. Marett's "birth of humility." Although philosophy deals with the problem of causality in the universe *plus* freedom in man, no solution has yet been found. We are still where the ancient Pharisaic teachers left their pupils: "All things are foreseen, yet man is free" (R. Akiba, in *Pirqe Aboth* III. 19).

To begin with, death is meaningless, however necessary in the biological system of animate nature. "God made not death" (Wisd. 1:13; cf. Ezek. 33:11), and the myths of all mankind may be viewed as attempts to account for its intrusion into the natural (i.e., original) scheme of things. The belief in an after-life of some kind, found universally in human society, is the strongest possible protest against the meaninglessness of death, and so are the attendant beliefs and practices, found almost everywhere; so also is the belief in metempsychosis—and even the belief in Hell. In Christianity, especially in St. Paul, almost the whole meaning of the "new life in Christ" is centered in the conquest of death, which takes place proleptically even here and now; and it is from this angle that Paul's great struggle over the Law must be viewed. For Paul, death was abnormal, an intrusion into life; it came as the consequence of sin, just as sickness and corruption follow infection. The Law was given in order to deal with this infected state, to "make sin to appear sinful," to bring it into the open, to make the diagnosis inescapable; but the Law could not do away with it. Dr. Nilsson writes almost as a theologian in handling this section of his thesis: "The problem of death has never been so central in any religion as it is in St. Paul, a great religious genius, who determined the course of Christianity for all ages" (p. 22). Particularly noteworthy is the relation of Paul's thought to Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God. The section dealing with the Vegetation Cycle (pp. 23-28) has great importance for both the Pauline and the Johannine theology, and sheds light upon them from Greek religion (cf. *Opusc. Sel.*, II, 542-683, and relevant sections in *G.G.R.*, I). He rightly rejects once more the still popular idea that a widespread "mystery theology" existed under the early Roman Empire, which had only to be applied to Christianity, and lo—there was its whole system of faith and doctrine ready-made and waiting to be used: "prefabricated," one might say. But not only Judaism and Christianity—the whole of the "higher" religion and philosophy of the Hellenistic and Hellenistic-Roman age (Gnosticism, Hermetism, Stoicism, Neo-

platonism) join with them in protesting against the meaninglessness of death, and in seeking for some solution of the problem it presents. However, for Greco-Roman religion and philosophy the problem of personal survival was intense and insoluble; in fact, such difficulties "cannot be solved by logical reasoning, but only by belief" (p. 38).

But not only is Death meaningless: so is Life! Sickness, plague, public catastrophe, drought, famine—all of them contrary to man's expectation—are a part of life, and provide its greatest problem! One view would take them as portents, or would find *portenta* among them, indicating that things were off the track and going wrong in the invisible world, and suggesting what steps should be taken to put them right once more. Another view would suggest the need for magical treatment: magic assumes that man possesses the power to right things again, religion that he must rely upon higher beings to do so—or else must humbly accept what comes as the will of the gods (p. 49). Hence the rites that grew up in early times, quasi-magical or wholly so, and designed to insure fertility and fresh harvests; hence the belief in a good Creator (wherever that belief was found) who maintains the order of the world (the *kosmos);* hence even Fatalism, when this idea gets pushed to its farthest limit *(moira,* or *aisa,* or *kismet);* hence the view that *hybris* brings *nemesis,* since the gods send events, and man's duty is to accept them and bow to the divine will without protest or opposition. A still further projection of this idea of order, based upon causality rather than accident, results in the materialist view, where nature *(physis)* takes the place of the gods, and likewise in astrology, where the heavenly powers are identified "scientifically" with the stars and planets. Astrology became all-powerful only when the old Babylonian star-lore was reinforced with Greek science, i.e., astronomy and mathematics, perhaps in Egypt during the second century B.C. (p. 62). *Fata regunt orbem, certa stant omnia lege* (Manilius, *Astron.* IV. 13). This whole section (pp. 61-70) is extremely important.[6] The remainder of the essay deals with the Book of Job (pp. 70-79) and with Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and the Indian religions (pp. 80-90).

It is clear that Professor Nilsson's thesis sets the phenomena of religion in proper perspective, and allows for their correlation with each other via the main emphasis to which all are related. The essay is, in brief, Nilsson's own weightiest answer to the question underlying all his re-

6. Cf. *Geschichte,* II, 256-67.

search, viz., the nature of this phenomenon, religion, to which he has contributed a lifetime of study; and one earnestly hopes that it will not be long before printed copies of the work are available. The understanding of religion which this veteran scholar has set forth is one which not only all his fellow-students, fellow-researchers, and fellow-teachers in the History of Religions must take seriously, but also those of us who toil in a neighboring corner of the vineyard and are more closely concerned with theology, religious education, preaching, exegesis, and worship. He has something of great importance to say to us as well.

# KIERKEGAARD ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

J. Heywood Thomas

Kierkegaard's philosophy was a philosophy of existence, and one of the most important questions it asked was what it meant to exist. For Kierkegaard the term "existence" *(existens)* was applicable only to the life of the man who had reached the level of religious existence. And it was his chosen task to set out how it was that such a man reached this level of being and what it meant for him to exist religiously, in particular, what it meant for him to exist as a Christian man. It is, therefore, not surprising that Kierkegaard should have some enlightening things to say about the psychology of religious existence and the philosophical questions which emerge from such an enquiry. The most central of these philosophical questions is that of the existence of God. Recently we have been made aware of John Wisdom's important article, "Gods."[1] There Professor Wisdom says that the existence of God is not now an experimental issue as it has been previously.[2] By this we presume he means that analysis has revealed the metaphysical nature of religious assertions so that we see now that these statements are not simple assertions about facts. If it were a question of fact, it could be settled by empirical investigation, but, when we consider how an argument about religious statements is settled, we see that it is not settled in this way. The evidence is as familiar to the theist as to the atheist and vice versa. Where they differ is the way in which the evidence counts for each. That is to say, the differentia of the religious man is a certain way of looking at the world so that every sparrow counts and the hairs of one's head are numbered. We shall not find the question discussed by Kierkegaard in quite this way, but it would be true to say that the essential philosophical character of the question was more or less clear to him.

When Kierkegaard discusses this matter of God's existence, he distinguishes between the existence of God as the object of faith and the being of God which the philosopher was—at any rate once—anxious to prove. Thus in his *Journal* he writes:

Immanently (in the fantastic medium of abstraction) God does not *exist*, he

1. A. G. N. Flew, *Logic and Language* (Oxford, 1951), pp. 187-206.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

only is—God only *exists* for an existing man, i.e., he can only exist *in faith.* . . . Faith is therefore the anticipation of the eternal which holds the factors together, the cleavages of existence. When an existing individual has not got faith God *is* not, neither does God *exist,* although understood from an eternal point of view God is eternally.[3]

Now this existence of God to which Kierkegaard here refers is, in a way, irrelevant to the question of God's existence as a philosophical question. This latter would be what Kierkegaard calls the fantastic abstract being. Yet if there is any meaning in this distinction that he has drawn, then it must be that this existence of God to faith is an important aspect of the matter which philosophy should not overlook. The Schoolmen, who were more than anyone responsible for the elaboration of the theistic arguments, did not, we would say, forget this. Yet the use made of their arguments did in fact tend to destroy it. Thus St. Thomas is rather misleading when he says that the existence of God is not an article of faith but a matter of proof.[4] But it is perfectly clear that when St. Anselm puts forward his "ontological argument" he has in mind the very fact that Kierkegaard draws attention to, that God really exists only for faith.[5] Unlike St. Anselm, however, Kierkegaard would not say that we can arrive at a knowledge of God's existence by any process of thought. The existence of God can, according to him, only be discovered by the leap which faith makes. In this way Kierkegaard distinguishes religious knowledge from knowledge of facts of nature. God's existence is not another fact about the universe—at any rate, it is quite different from all other information about factual existence. This is Kierkegaard's point when he protests against the abstract way in which philosophers and theologians have talked about God in putting forward their arguments to prove his existence. He argues that this sort of talk will never show us the real texture of religious language.

Now what is wrong with these arguments in Kierkegaard's opinion? In *Philosophical Fragments* he says that the idea of demonstrating the existence of God is "an excellent subject for a comedy of the higher

3. *The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard* (Ed. Dru), 605.

4. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, Q. 2, Art. 2, Reply Obj. 1.

5. *Sancti Anselmi Proslogion,* C. 11. See also E. Gilson's "Sens et nature de l'argument de St. Anselm," *Archives de l'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen age* (Paris 1944). Cf. Gilson, *Etudes de la philosophie médiévale* (Strasbourg, 1921).

lunacy"[6] and pours scorn on all who would attempt such a proof. At this point Kierkegaard makes an important philosophical criticism, as well as the purely religious criticism which we find repeated in the *Journal*.[7] The way in which he introduces this point does not seem to us a very good way of talking. He speaks of "the paradoxical passion of the reason" which impels the reason to seek its own annihilation. Thus inspired the reason collides with something which is unknown and which we may call God.[8] It is difficult to see what can be gained from this very loose talk. Indeed, it seems to us that the argument would have been better without it. However, Kierkegaard proceeds to say that "if God does not exist it would of course be impossible to prove it; and if he does exist it would be folly to attempt to prove it."[9] This is the real point he is making. The reason he gives is that I would, if I were to attempt the proof of God's existence, have assumed at the outset that God does exist—otherwise the argument could not begin. He makes the same point in the *Postscript* where he says:

> . . . if God is not really conceived as existing . . . the argument cannot even get started. It would then read about as follows: A supreme being who does not exist must possess all perfection, including that of existence; ergo a supreme being who does not exist must exist. This would be a strange conclusion. Either the supreme being was non-existent in the premises, and came into existence in the conclusion, which is quite impossible; or he was existent in the premises in which case he cannot come into existence in the conclusion.[10]

The charge he makes, therefore, is that all arguments about God's existence are guilty of the fallacy of *petitio principi*. Now is this true? Clearly it is not. Kierkegaard wrongly assumes that a two-value propositional logic must mean either that we assert that something is so or that we assert that it is not at all so. It does, indeed, mean that it is impossible for both "p" and "not-p" to be true. But when considering any proposition "p" we surely need not assert its falsehood because we do not assert its truth. There are three epistemological attitudes towards any proposition: (1) We may assert its truth; (2) We may assert its falsehood; (3) We may doubt it. And, surely, when there is talk of proving that God

6. *Philosophical Fragments*, p. 34, n. 3.
7. *Journals*, 1027.
8. *Fragments*, p. 30.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
10. *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, p. 298.

exists, the question usually arises because we doubt whether he does or not. Indeed, the point of asking for a demonstration is that we wish to remove the doubt, though perhaps this is not the way in which the doubt is removed. This is not unimportant, and Kierkegaard points to it when he says that if we do know that God exists then to ask for a proof is sheer folly. Consider an analogous situation. We are in a room and are talking about furniture. Suddenly, when we are discussing the beauty of a Chippendale chair, some one says, "Ah! But can you prove to me that physical objects exist?" The situation is unnatural, even grotesque. We never ask for a proof of the external world in ordinary language. The question only arises from metaphysical considerations.

Kierkegaard does, however, enunciate a principle here which, if it is true, cuts the ground from beneath all theistic systems which claim that God's existence is demonstrable. He argues that existence is always a datum of experience and can in no circumstances be demonstrated. It is always the starting point of an argument and not its conclusion.[11] He gives two examples—the question of the existence of a stone and that of the existence of Napoleon.[12] What would it be to prove the existence of a stone, he asks. We could not have a process of argument which would not start from the existence of something. We can imagine a person A asking another person B to prove to him that a stone exists. B picks up a stone and says, "This is a stone," and, if necessary, he shows that this thing has all the qualities one says a stone possesses. In this connection we recall G. E. Moore's famous "proof" of physical objects.[13] Dealing with the question of the existence of an external world, Moore raised his two hands and said that thereby he had proved the existence of two things in the external world. He goes further and maintains that this is the only proof you can have, that if any other proof is required then we are asking for the impossible.[14] What Moore says thus seems to support Kierkegaard's contention that reasoning moves away from existence and not towards it. And, if this is so, then it is idle to talk of a logical demonstration of God's existence. This is seen again if we consider the other analogue which Kierkegaard mentions, namely

11. *Papirer,* V, A 7, 42.
12. *Fragments,* p. 31.
13. G. E. Moore, "Proof of an external world," *Proceedings of the British Academy* (1939), pp. 273-301.
14. *Ibid.,* p. 299.

the attempt to prove Napoleon's existence from his deeds. This would, he says, be a most curious process; for though Napoleon's existence does in a sense explain his deeds, his deeds do not afford a proof of his existence—unless we have already assumed his existence. That is to say, if I speak of the deeds of Napoleon as Napoleon's deeds, then clearly they prove his existence because I have used the name of an individual to describe them.[15] And if I describe the deeds in terms of an individual, then it does indeed follow that if we know the deeds we can also know the individual. But clearly this is a mere tautology, and since it is so trivial, the situation is quite uninteresting. What would it be to show otherwise that Napoleon existed? We could point to certain facts of history and say that these are such that we may conclude from them that a military genius existed. We cannot, however, conclude that Napoleon existed. Now it might be supposed that where we fail with Napoleon's existence we are bound to succeed with God's, because between God's existence and His works there must surely be that absolute relationship which cannot exist between Napoleon and his deeds. This supposition is, however, of no use. For though it is true to say that there is this absolute relation between God and His works it is not clear that we can see these works.

> The works from which I would deduce (God's) existence are not immediately given. . . . From what works then do I propose to derive a proof? From the world as apprehended through an ideal interpretation, i.e., such as they do not immediately reveal themselves. But in that case it is not from the works that I prove God's existence. I merely develop the ideality I have presupposed, and because of my confidence in this I make so bold as to defy all objections . . . ; but what else is this but to presuppose that God exists, so that I begin by virtue of confidence in Him?[16]

This point which Kierkegaard makes here is an extremely important one, and it shows both the appeal and the weakness of all forms of the cosmological argument. There can be no doubt that "the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth forth his handiwork"—to the religious man. But this cannot be, as it were, read off from their appearance. Thus no form of the cosmological argument will lead us any nearer to grasping the epistemology of faith, because faith introduces a new concept. For this reason we do not see that there

15. *Fragments*, p. 32.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

can be much point in saying, as for instance Dr. Austin Farrer does, that God "must be apprehended in the cosmological relation."[17] If we are to apprehend God in this relation, we must introduce a new concept into our understanding of the cosmos, a concept which is not elicited from it.

Kierkegaard also points out that the profundity of Spinoza's argument—"essentia involvit existentia"[18]—lies in his not making existence an accident. Spinoza would say that perfection is directly proportionate to the degree of existence.[19] Therefore to say that essence implies existence is a tautology. Kierkegaard adds that, though Spinoza grasps the importance of starting with existence, he does not distinguish the two ways in which one can speak of existence, viz., as ideal existence and as actual existence.[20] And the whole problem about God's existence is how to grasp His actual existence. Kierkegaard repeats this point in the *Journal* where he says:

> What confuses the whole doctrine about "being" in logic is that people do not notice that they are always operating with the concept "existence." But the *concept* existence is an ideality and the difficulty is, of course, whether existence can be reduced to a concept. . . . But existence corresponds to the individual thing, individual, which even Aristotle teaches lies outside or at least cannot be reduced to a concept.[21]

We can see the importance of this when we consider it in conjunction with St. Anselm's ontological argument. The argument is too familiar to be expounded at any length. This is how Anselm himself stated it:

> Convincitur ergo etiam insipiens esse vel in intellectu aliquid, quo nihil maius cogitari potest; quia hoc cum audit, intellegit; et quicquid intellegitur, in intellectu est. Et certe id, quo maius cogitari nequit, non potest esse in intellectu solo. Si enim vel in solo intellectu est, potest cogitari esse et in re: quod maius est. Si ergo id, quo maius cogitari non potest, est in intellectu solo, id ipsum, quo maius cogitari non potest, est quo maius cogitari potest:

17. A. Farrer, *Finite and Infinite* (London, 1945), p. 45. "There is," he says, "no question of demonstrating God from the creatures by a pure inference. God, being a unique existent, must be apprehended if he is to be known at all. But . . . he must be apprehended in the cosmological relation (i.e., his relation to the finite world) and not in abstraction from it."

18. *Fragments*, p. 32. n.

19. Spinoza, *Principia*, Pars I, propositio VII, lemma I, and nota II.

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Journals*, 1027.

sed certe hoc esse non potest. Existit ergo procul dubio aliquid quo maius cogitari non valet, et in intellectu et in re.[22]

This ontological argument of Anselm's has been differently interpreted by various scholars.[23] Its full and correct exposition is not what here concerns us. What we are concerned with are simply one or two points about the argument which are usually overlooked. We are prone to think that Kant demolished the whole of Anselm's argument, whereas, in fact, Kant, like Gaunilo, missed a great deal of what the argument said. One profound insight which Anselm expresses here is this: when we speak about God, we are not speaking of something which can in any way be called universal.[24] There is no such distinction possible in talk about God as that between the universal "red" and its particular instantiation. When we see this, we see that it is quite erroneous to think that Anselm's argument starts with a concept "aliquid quo nihil maius cogitari potest." Now this is very important, for modern logical analysis might lead us to think otherwise. Thus Professor Gilbert Ryle says:

> Since Kant, we have, most of us, paid lip service to the doctrine that "existence is not a quality" and so we have rejected the pseudo-implication of the ontological argument: "God is perfect, being perfect entails being existent . . . God exists." For if existence is not a quality, it is not the sort of thing that can be entailed by a quality. . . . But until fairly recently it was not noticed that if in "God exists," "exists" is not a predicate (save in grammar), then in the same statement "God" cannot be (save in grammar) the subject of predication.[25]

From this Ryle concludes that here the term "God" is a predicative expression. This was what Kierkegaard pointed out about Spinoza's argument.[26] But he also is clear on the point that, so long as we talk about God in this way, we never grasp the logic of the religious man's language. This we do only as we see that God is an individual, which was Anselm's point. So we might say that, within the context of religious

22. Anselm, *Proslogion*, c.II, *Sancti Anselmi Cantuariensis Opuscula Philosophico–Theologica Selecta*, Ed. Haas (Tübingen, 1863), I, 139.

23. E.g., Barth, *Fides quaerens intellectum*, and Gilson, "Sens et nature de l'argument de St. Anselm," *op. cit.*

24. It is strange that St. Thomas makes the same point. It is to be found *expressis verbis* in *Summa Theologica*, I, Q. 3, Art. 5.

25. Flew, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

26. *Philosophical Fragments*, pp. 32-33, note.

language, the assertion "God exists" must be analyzed on the pattern of the familiar subject-predicate assertion. But since this would be a tautology, there is little point in our saying so. And the whole difficulty of the problem of God's existence is to understand how we come to know Him as an individual. To this we now return.

How, according to Kierkegaard, are we to discover God's actual existence? His answer is that we discover this by means of a leap.[27] God's existence does not, he says, emerge from the proof "straightway without any breach of continuity." Rather is it like the Cartesian dolls which stand on their heads as soon as they are released. The *demonstrandum* only emerges when the demonstration has been "let go." Kierkegaard calls this "letting go" a leap, but vouchsafes no further information about it in the *Fragments*. It is, nevertheless, a fundamental concept in his thought, and we meet it fairly often in his other works. Its origin is probably to be found in Jacobi in the correspondence which he had with Lessing, though there is a divergence of opinion among scholars on this point. For instance, Bishop Bohlin would maintain that it derives from Hegel's talk about the qualitative leap.[28] Then Reuter points out that there is a similar idea in Kant's theory of the jump which takes us beyond experience.[29] And when we consider that the term ultimately derives from Aristotle, we may be led to think that Kierkegaard obtained it from his study of Aristotle.[30] The question is thus very complicated. But it is surely a most important fact that in the *Postscript,* where the term is used most in connection with the existence of God, it is clearly ascribed to Jacobi.[31] And the peculiar quality of the leap of faith in Kierkegaard is very much like what Jacobi had in mind when he described it as the *salto mortale,* for this leap is something from which one naturally recoils.[32]

When we try to understand what this talk of the leap means, we are again facing a very difficult task. Jean Wahl says, "Cette théorie du

27. *Fragments,* pp. 33-34 (*S.V.,* IV, 236-37).

28. T. Bohlin, *Kierkegaards Dogmatiska Askadning,* p. 473. Cf. Hegel, *Werke,* II, 19.

29. H. Reuter, *Kierkegaards Religionsphilosophie,* p. 23.

30. We know both from the *Papirer* and from the evidence of the auction catalogue of his library *(Fortegnelse over Dr. Søren A. Kierkegaards Efterladte Bogsamling,* Copenhagen, 1856) that he made a profound study of Aristotle. For instance, items 1056-1097 are all *Aristoteliana.*

31. See *Postscript,* p. 95, and F. H. Jacobi.

32. Cf. *Postscript,* pp. 188, 333. Cf. *Training in Christianity,* p. 107, et passim.

saut est l'affirmation pour Kierkegaard du discontinu et de l'irrationel," and he goes on to say that one of the ways in which it is used is to describe the nature of belief in the existence of God.[33] Now is this quite right? It is certainly true to say that by means of this theory of the leap Kierkegaard points to a discontinuity in the argumentation about God's existence, if by this we mean to say that there is no means of deriving this belief simply and straightforwardly from a logical demonstration. But this is not at all the same thing as saying that this theory is the assertion of any irrational interpertation of religious belief. We must guard ourselves against the temptation of dubbing Kierkegaard either "rationalist" (as Bohlin does on occasion) or "irrationalist" (as Weber and others do) and then trying to understand his complex discussion in terms of either category simply. Kierkegaard does, indeed, often talk of religious faith as if it were something irrational, but we would say that he never intended presenting faith in terms which would allow us to subsume it under any one such category as the "irrational." Thus Swenson says, "I have never seen any passage in which Kierkegaard shows scorn for objective validity."[34] With this in mind, then, let us return to the first point about discontinuity. The word is ugly and not very clear in its significance, either. The point is that God is not the conclusion of any argument. Sir Henry Jones is reputed to have been fond of saying that the existence of God was the best hypothesis that a man could conceive. In a way this is very true. Scarcely any one will deny that the belief in God is always used by the religious man as an explanation of his world. In this way the belief is put forward as the best theory to describe and explain the universe in which man finds himself, but the word "hypothesis" suggests a model which is quite misleading, the model namely of calculation of probability. Hypothesis is the term we invariably use for scientific theory because it is the explanation offered as probably true, and we say that one hypothesis is more probable than another. Now it is exactly this view which Kierkegaard pronounces to be a completely erroneous representation of religious faith. With characteristic irony he paints the picture of a man who makes investigations to discover the probability of the object of faith, only to find that if it is probable, it

33. J. Wahl, *Etudes Kierkegaardiennes* (Paris 1938), p. 145.
34. D. F. Swenson, *Something about Kierkegaard* (Minneapolis, 1941), p. 238.

is no longer the object of faith.[35] There is a clear sense, therefore, in which faith is quite unlike scientific thinking, and the logic of faith thus quite dissimilar to the logic of scientific judgments (even though it may be true that there is also a sense in which the two types of thinking are very much alike). It is best that we should have clear in our minds the essential difference we have already seen before we move on to any comparison. We have seen that the scientific theory or explanation is always the result of an examination of data and is the probable judgment we make on the evidence of the data. An important feature of scientific judgments is that, once we have a theory to cover the data past and present, we ask whether this enables us to make predictions. So we make trial predictions from the theory using the methods of deductive logic as a guide. As long as we find the predictions confirmed by experience, we retain the theory. If, however, the prediction is shown to be wrong, then we either modify the theory or abandon it completely. Now we see here the essential difference between science and religion. Because science is at all points linked to evidence and can be properly termed a probability calculation, we can in our science reach a point which is the breaking point of a particular theory. But in religion this is not so. Professor Wisdom thus says that "an experimental hypothesis, such as the existence of God, may start by being experimental and gradually become something quite different."[36] He shows this by means of his story about the gardener:

> Two people return to their long neglected garden and find among the weeds a few of the old plants surprisingly vigorous, One says to the other, "It must be that a gardener has been coming and doing something about these plants." Upon enquiry they find that no neighbour has ever seen any one at work in their garden. The first man says to the other, "He must have worked while people slept." The other says, "No, someone would have heard him and besides, anybody who cared about the plants would have kept down these weeds." The first man says, "Look at the way these are arranged. There is purpose and feeling for beauty here. I believe that someone comes, someone invisible to mortal eyes." . . . Besides examining the garden carefully they also study what happens to gardens left without attention. Each learns all the other learns about this and about the garden. Consequently, when after all this, one says, "I still believe a gardener comes," while the other says, "I don't," their different words now reflect no difference as to what they have found in the garden,

35. *Postscript*, p. 189; cf. pp. 208, 209.
36. Wisdom, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

no difference as to what they would find in the garden if they looked further, and no difference about how fast untended gardens fall into disorder. At this stage, in this context, the gardener hypothesis has ceased to be experimental.[37]

We have quoted this story more or less fully because it illustrates how we are prone at first to think of religious assertions in the same way as scientific hypothesis. They seem to be descriptions of the universe which can be verified by investigation. But then there is a point reached when we see that investigation is no longer relevant. Here we can, strangely enough, see a similarity to a certain situation in science; we may have two scientific theories which lead to the same predictions and yet their concepts and mathematical methods are totally dissimilar. Consider, for example, the contrast between "classical" and "relative" physics. In his *Special Theory of Relativity*, Einstein put forward the theory which went halfway toward explaining the apparent anomalies in the behavior of light which were puzzling physicists. Now he did this without abandoning the framework of "classical" physics. However, in the *General Theory of Relativity* he pointed out that these phenomena could be more elegantly explained if we abandoned the Euclidian geometry of "classical" physics and used a different kind of mathematical framework. The point is that here we are confronted with a choice, and this element of choice is common to science and religion. Yet we must remember that the choice is made in the two situations for very different reasons, so that the analogy is not particularly fruitful. It was precisely this which Kierkegaard wished to emphasize when he described faith as a leap. Faith is the choice made by the religious man in answer to the "either-or" with which life confronts him.

Another very important thing which Kierkegaard expresses by this term is that faith must always be conceived as a risk or a venture. Dr. Croxall does not seem to us to appreciate the force of this point when, somewhat apologetically, he tries to conceive the leap as that made by one of a party of mountain climbers. "When we need to leap a crevasse on an ice bound mountain, it is better, safer, and gives more confidence if we are roped to others, and gives us courage."[38] The picture this gives is quite other than that which Kierkegaard suggests by his emphatic remarks about the leap, describing it as the absolute leap and *salto*

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 192 f.
38. T. H. Croxall, *Kierkegaard Studies* (London, 1948), p. 75.

*mortale*. The picture which Croxall gives is not that of a life or death struggle, the tremendous venture which characterizes a hazardous climb. If we fall there the others will haul us up, and we have no cause to fear unduly. But with faith there is no guarantee that we shall not be mistaken. There is no one to help us. We have to fend for ourselves, and when we draw ourselves together for that final leap, we do so because we are prepared to take the risk of falling into the crevasse. Here is a picture which is much nearer to Kierkegaard's meaning. The icy crevasse lies between us and our haven, and we may fall into it if we make the leap. Yet on this side there is nothing but slow death, either. So with our life in both hands we—leap. There is surely no clearer way of expressing the risk of religious faith. The assertion of God's existence is always a venture, because it is a matter on which we cannot have definite assurance before we choose. And after we have chosen we still have no certainty other than our own conviction that we have found God. Kierkegaard represents this in a characteristically graphic way:

> Sitting quietly in a ship while the weather is calm is not a picture of faith; but when the ship has sprung a leak, enthusiastically to keep the ship afloat by pumping while yet not seeking the harbour: this is the picture. And if the picture involves an impossibility in the long run, that is but the imperfection of the picture; faith persists. While the understanding, like a despairing passenger, stretches out its arms toward the shore, but in vain, faith works with all its energy in the depths of the soul: glad and victorious it saves the soul against the understanding.[39]

Kierkegaard calls this certitude "the second immediacy"[40] or "the immediacy after reflection."[41] It is very difficult to understand clearly, for he has already emphasized that faith is not to be confused with any immediate cognition or, indeed, any sort of cognition.[42] How then are we to interpret this term "immediacy"? It seems that Kierkegaard was less interested in being completely consistent than he was in giving a full descripion of faith, and when he said that faith is not to be identified with immediate cognition he was saying something clearly true. We may say that what we know immediately we cannot doubt,

39. *Postscript*, p. 202 n.
40. *Fear and Trembling*, p. 125.
41. *Papirer*, VIII, A 650.
42. *Ibid.*, I, A 36.

yet surely one of the essential characteristics of the assertion that God exists is that it should be dubitable in the sense that we could, if we would, doubt it. And when we ask what it is that we know immediately, we see that it is simply our own feelings. For instance, we would say that a man knows immediately that he has a headache, but we would not say that he knows immediately that another man has a headache. That is, immediate knowledge is possible only in cases of autobiographical assertions. When Kierkegaard says that faith is not to be identified with immediate knowledge, he is then saying that there is an essential difference between the assertion "God exists" and the assertion "I have a headache." The second can be translated without residuum into the form "I feel that I have a headache," whereas the first is not the same as saying "I feel that God exists" (except when the word "feel" is used in a cognitive sense). This was Kierkegaard's criticism of Schleiermacher, whose definition of religion as the feeling of dependence gave people the idea that faith was just another feeling like headache, pleasure, pain, etc. But when we have grasped this, we must also say that religious experience is very like this immediate knowledge of sensations. To say quite boldly that faith is an immediate knowledge of God, as has been the popular practice of theologians during the last decade or so, is to lay ourselves open to the criticism that faith is therefore nothing more than sensation and its assertions are merely subjective. This Kierkegaard did not do. At the cost of seeming inconsistent, he denied that faith is an immediate knowledge and asserted that it is the second immediacy which follows reflection. So Kierkegaard remains what he intended to be both in philosophy and in religion—a corrective. His work is extremely valuable in setting out the very complex pattern of religious language and placing it on the map of language which philosophy must always study with care and zeal.

# MARTIN BUBER AND CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

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## I

MARTIN BUBER'S INFLUENCE on religious thought has steadily grown and spread for more than three generations and has been equally great among Christian thinkers as among Jews. Among the prominent Christian religious thinkers whom Buber has significantly influenced are John Baillie, Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Father M. C. D'Arcy, Herbert H. Farmer, J. E. Fison, Friedrich Gogarten, Karl Heim, Reuel Howe, Hermann von Keyserling, Ernst Michel, Reinhold Niebuhr, H. Richard Niebuhr, J. H. Oldham, Theodore Steinbüchel, Erich Przywara, S.J., and Paul Tillich. Mention should also be made of a number of Christian thinkers whose thought has significantly paralleled Buber's without either influencing or being influenced by him. Of these the most important are Ferdinand Ebner, John Macmurray, Gabriel Marcel, and Eugene Rosenstock-Huessy.

The first of a series of Swiss pamphlets subtitled "Building Stones of a Coming Protestantism" is devoted to "Martin Buber's Way in Our Time." In this pamphlet, written in 1940, Walter Nigg says that Martin Buber "possesses a paradigmatic significance" for the religious situation of modern man:

> If he was not able to change the face of the present in a decisive way, his groping toward the mainsprings of human existence enables one not only to grasp more deeply the religious situation of our time but also to foresee the direction in which a new breakthrough must be sought.[1]

In 1947 J. H. Oldham, the leader of the ecumenical movement in the Christian Church, made a similar but even more forceful appraisal of Buber's significance for Christianity:

> I am convinced that it is by opening its mind, and conforming its practice, to the truth which Buber has perceived and so powerfully set forth that the Church can recover a fresh understanding of its own faith, and regain a real connection with the actual life of our time.[2]

1. Walter Nigg, "Martin Bubers Weg in unserer Zeit," *Religiöse Gegenwartsfragen*, I (Bern, 1940), 5. (My translation.)
2. *Real Life Is Meeting* (London, 1947), pp. 13-16.

In 1948 Paul Tillich, who has himself been greatly influenced by Buber, wrote of his significance for Protestant theology as lying in three main directions: his "existential interpretation of prophetic religion, his rediscovery of mysticism as an element within prophetic religion, and his understanding of the relation between prophetic religion and culture, especially in the social and political realms":

> Buber's existential "I-Thou" philosophy . . . should be a powerful help in reversing the victory of the "It" over the "Thou" *and* the "I" in present civilization. . . . The "I-Thou" philosophy . . ., challenging both orthodox and liberal theology, points a way beyond their alternatives.[3]

It is *I and Thou* which has in particular received great attention, and many recent continental and English works give evidence that it is already recognized as a classic. Walter Marshall Horton points it out as the most explicit example of the new sense of depth in Continental theology since 1914. J. H. Oldham says of it: "I question whether any book has been published in the present century the message of which, if it were understood and heeded, would have such far-reaching consequences for the life of our time."[4] Oldham expands this statement in another place:

> The realization of the crucial significance of relations between persons, and of the fundamentally *social* nature of reality is the necessary, saving corrective of the dominance of our age by the scientific way of thinking, the results of which, as we know, may involve us in universal destruction, and by the technical mastery of things, which threatens man with the no less serious fate of dehumanisation.[5]

Herbert H. Farmer speaks of the central concept of *I and Thou* as the most important contribution given to us of recent years toward the reflective grasp of our faith.[6] *I and Thou,* further, occupies an important place in the Episcopal Church's re-education of its clergy for its new wholesale, long-range education program, and it has had a decisive influence on the "relational theology" in terms of which this

3. "Martin Buber and Christian Thought," *Commentary,* v (1948), 397. See also "Jewish Influences on Contemporary Christian Theology," *Cross Currents,* II (1952), 38-42.

4. *Op. cit.,* pp. 27 f.

5. "Life as Dialogue," *Christian News-Letters,* Supplement to No. 281 (March 19, 1947), pp. 7 f.

6. *The Servant of the Word* (New York, 1942), pp. 25 f.

program has been oriented.[7] One Anglo-Catholic theologian, J. E. Fison, uses Buber's philosophy as the central element in his plea for a greater emphasis on the blessing of the Holy Spirit. "The whole conception of spirit," writes Fison, "as much in St. John 3 and in St. Augustine as in the Old Testament, points to that between-ness in which Buber sees the essential meaning of life."[8]

II

The widespread influence of *I and Thou* on Christian thought does not mean, unfortunately, an equally widespread understanding of Buber's I-Thou philosophy. Many have not followed Oldham's warning that *I and Thou* is a book which must be reread again and again and allowed to slowly remold one's thought. Not only has Buber's I-Thou philosophy been applied in the most diverse ways, but it has also, at times, been seriously distorted in the application. Melville Chaning-Pearce, for example, speaks of *I and Thou* as a "manifest justification of Christianity as . . . a 'cosmic mystery play' of the fall, the redemption and resurrection of being."[9] This statement is incompatible both with Buber's Jewishness and with the concreteness of the meeting with the Thou. Nicholas Berdyaev has taken over Buber's I-Thou philosophy in *Society and Solitude,* but he has never really understood the ontological significance of the sphere of the "between," for though he recognizes that no *I* exists without a *Thou,* his real emphasis is on subjectivity and inwardness. At the same time, he criticizes Buber in a way that no careful reader of *I and Thou* could possibly do, suggesting that for Buber the I-Thou relation is uniquely between man and God and not between man and man and within the larger human community.[10]

7. According to the Rev. James Pike, Dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the Episcopal Church is now engaged in the development of a program of education from the cradle to the grave, as a part of which its clergy is being systematically trained, at the College of Preachers in Washington, in "relation theology," an application of the I-Thou relation to sacrament, grace, and redemption, conceived in relational terms, primarily in the family. When Dr. Buber was in this country he met with twenty-five leaders in this movement, among them Dr. Theodore Wedel, Dr. Reuel Howe, Canon V. O. Ward, and Dean Pike. See R. L. Howe, *Man's Need and God's Answer* (Greenwich, Conn.: Seabury Press, 1952).

8. *The Blessing of the Holy Spirit* (New York, 1950).

9. Nicodemus *(pseud.), Renascence, An Essay in Faith* (London, 1943), pp. 73 ff.

10. *Society and Solitude* (New York, 1938), pp. 79 ff.

The German theologian, Karl Heim, and the Swedish theologian, John Cullberg, have both systematized the I-Thou philosophy to the point where it bears unmistakable traces of that reliance on the reality of abstraction which characterizes I-It. This is particularly true of Heim's recasting of the distinction between the I-Thou and the I-It relations in terms of a mathematical analogy of dimensions.[11] The greatest danger of this type of overconceptualization is that it may lead one to remain content with dialogical philosophizing in place of lived dialogue. The German Benedictine monk, Fr. Caesarius Lauer, has pointed to this danger with unusual effectiveness in a letter written to Buber in 1951:

> The "dialogue" about dialogue is growing on all sides. That should make one glad, but it disquiets me. For—if all the signs do not deceive—the talk about dialogue takes from men the living experience of dialogical life. . . . In dialogic it is the realization that is decisive, since it is working reality, that means —Life. Now, the word certainly belongs to this realization, as Ebner has well shown. But just the word, not words, not talk, logicizing dialectic. . . . It is just the "spiritual" man of today who suffers in a frightful fashion the old temptation of the human spirit, that is to say, that of objectifying the living accomplishment. . . . These "dialogical" dialecticians do not seem to notice that the dialogic is essentially a way. However, "the way is there that one may walk on it," as you once said.[12]

Many of the Christian thinkers and theologians who have adopted the I-Thou philosophy have recast it in the form of a radical dualism between the I-Thou and the I-It relations entirely incompatible with Buber's own thought. Writers like Friedrich Gogarten, Melville Chaning-Pearce, Emil Brunner, and Karl Barth in varying degrees equate I-It with man's sinful nature, and I-Thou with the grace and divine love which are only present in their purity in Christ. Even though Brunner and Barth both recognize that man's existence as man is made possible only through the I-Thou relation, they both emphasize the limitations that man's sinfulness places upon his ability to enter into this relationship. Karl Heim, in contrast, writes that both the movement of sacrifice for the other and that of closing oneself against him are possible within the I-Thou relation. By thus divorcing this relation from

11. *Glaube und Denken* (Berlin, 1931); *God Transcendent* (New York, 1936). John Cullberg, *Das Du und die Wirklichkeit* (Uppsala, 1933), Systematic Part.

12. Quoted with the permission of the author. (My translation.)

the clear ethical implications which both Buber and Ferdinand Ebner have given it, Heim makes possible a dualism on the basis of which he characterizes man's relation with the eternal Thou as taking place in an altogether different dimension from his relation with his human Thou. Father M. C. D'Arcy comes closer to Buber in his criticism of the radicality of the Protestant dualism between *eros* and *agape,* yet he mistakenly assumes that Heim is developing what was implicit in Buber and, as a result, ascribes to Buber the dualism which is present in Heim.[13]

The ultimate ethical consequence of this radical split between I-Thou and I-It is a de-emphasis on the possibility and significance of ethical action and a tendency to reduce man to the role of passive recipient of grace. Thus Gogarten says that the I never initiates ethical action but only fulfills or denies the claim of the Thou.[14] Another result is the tendency to place the ethical choice in terms of the choice between one's own interest and that of others. This second result is seen most clearly in Gogarten's reworking of Buber's philosophy of I *and* Thou into a philosophy of I *or* Thou. One must choose *between* the I and the Thou, says Gogarten, and in this he is followed by John Cullberg and to a lesser degree by Heim.[15]

This position is unrealistic, for it forgets the participation of the I even in so-called "altruistic" actions. It also shows that neither Gogarten nor Cullberg have understood the true basis of the I-Thou philosophy which they have adopted. Reality is not *within* each of the two individuals in a relationship but *between* them. One cannot divide up a relationship into two separate parts, one of which is "mine" and one of which is "thine" and then choose between them. One can only choose by one's actions and attitudes to move in the direction of relationship and reciprocity—I-Thou—or separateness and mutual exploitation—I-It. Dialogue is a value which includes both members of the relationship. One's giving to the other may indeed be at the expense of something

13. F. Gogarten, *Ich Glaube an den dreieinigen Gott* (Jena, 1926), pp. 103-16, 142-52, 182-88; E. Brunner, *Wahrheit als Begegnung* (Berlin, 1938), pp. 66 f., 77 f., *Man in Revolt* (New York, 1939), Ch. VI; K. Heim, *Glaube und Denken,* pp. 258-61, 328 ff., 342-49, 370-74, *God Transcendent,* Ch. VII; M. C. D'Arcy, *The Mind and Heart of Love* (New York, 1947), p. 204, cf. pp. 114-23, 218, 318-21.

14. *Op. cit.,* pp. 110-16.

15. *Ibid.,* pp. 109-49; Cullberg, *op. cit.,* pp. 201 ff., 222-26; Heim, *Glaube und Denken,* pp. 342-49.

that one wants and needs oneself for the best of reasons. But this does not mean that one is sacrificing one's self in the giving. One is rather affirming one's self through a response that takes one out of the realm of domination and enjoyment into the realm of real personal existence. Up to a certain point this applies even in a relationship in which the other person treats one strictly as an It, for the other must be a Thou for us unconditionally and not dependent on how he treats us. No I-Thou relationship can be complete without reciprocity, however, and our ability to treat the other person as a Thou is, in fact, limited by the extent to which he does or does not treat us as a Thou. True giving is giving in relationship, whether it be the gift of material support or the gift of a caress or a word. It is only possible to give in very limited degree to one who remains resolutely closed to relationship.

Karl Barth has rejected the dualism between *eros* and *agape* in his own Christianizing of the I-Thou relation in a recent volume of his *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik*. He has also followed Buber in emphasizing the quality of spontaneity and reciprocity in the I-Thou relation which must rule out any confusion of the I-Thou relation with dominance or submission.[16] Writing in 1948, Barth very possibly had in mind the effects that followed in Germany from a confusion of real relationship with what Erich Fromm would call authoritarian or sado-masochistic relationship. Two earlier German theologians who took over Buber's I-Thou philosophy—Friedrich Gogarten and Karl Heim—both distorted it by reconciling it with an authoritarian attitude. In Gogarten's case this means submission to the state and, in Heim's, submission to another person.[17] Thus Heim writes:

> I may submit to you as my authority or my guide. You may submit to me and recognize mine as the higher will. We may arrive at a voluntary agreement of comradeship and cooperation. But that this obedience and this fellowship always have the character of a "Thou" relation, and can never be reduced to an "It" relation, may be seen from the fact that the tension inherent in the "Thou" relation cannot be happily resolved except by submission or fellowship.[18]

16. *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik*, III, pt. 2: *Die Lehre von der Schöpfung* (Zürich, 1948), 318-29, 337-40.

17. For Buber's criticism of Gogarten's *Political Ethics*, see his *Between Man and Man* (London, 1947), pp. 76 f.

18. *God Transcendent*, pp. 163-67.

In the light of Buber's clear and consistent emphasis on the independence and full freedom of the two partners to the I-Thou relationship, it is ironical to find Karl Barth suggesting that the main difference between his I-Thou philosophy and that of Buber is that he (Barth) makes "freedom of the heart between man and man the root and crown of the concept of humanity." Barth feels that he shares in common with Buber the emphasis on openness of seeing and being seen, addressing and being addressed, as well as the emphasis on the reciprocal support which the members of the relationship give to each other. But he feels that he differs in that he makes the decisive element in the I-Thou relationship the freedom with which the two enter into relationship and mutually confirm each other. This freedom implies for Barth just that rejection of the attempt to remove the distance between the I and the Thou through dominance or submission which has always been the simplest presupposition of Buber's I-Thou relationship.[19] Buber's statements about the possessiveness of I-It, the movement out to meeting with the Thou, the necessity of becoming a "Single One," the acceptance of the "otherness" of the Thou, the relation between freedom and responsibility, and the mutual confirmation of the I and the Thou, each as that which he is and must become—all imply the very spontaneity which Barth tends to claim exclusively for his theological anthropology because of its roots in Christian love. That Barth should thus misinterpret Buber is indeed strange in the light of the clearly great influence, both direct and indirect, of Buber's dialogical thought on Barth's revision of his theology in the direction of the I-Thou relationship.[20]

Buber's emphasis on spontaneity is much stronger, in fact, than that of Barth himself and the other Christian theologians using the I-Thou terminology—a difference probably caused by the Christian tendency to emphasize the gap between man's fallen nature and Christian love. The mystery of man's creation, according to Buber, is that God established him in an independence which has since remained undiminished

19. Barth, *op. cit.*, pp. 333 ff.

20. Although Barth was undoubtedly also influenced by Ferdinand Ebner and Karl Löwith, most of his terminology *(Ich und Du, Begegnung, Dialog, Monolog)* is Buber's. Testifying to this influence, Tillich writes: "Through the great Swiss theologians, Barth and Brunner, Buber's basic idea has become a common good of Protestant theology . . .," "Jewish Influences on Contemporary Christian Theology," *op. cit.*, p. 38.

and that, in this independence, he stands over against God: "So man takes part with full freedom and spontaneity in the dialogue between the two which forms the essence of existence." The Christian tendency from Augustine to the Reformation to see faith as a gift of God has tended, in Buber's opinion, to obscure that spontaneity:

> The Israelite mystery of man as an independent partner of God retreated into obscurity, and the dogma of original sin was not, indeed, adapted to further that especial connection of the ethical with the religious that true theonomy seeks to realize through the believing autonomy of man.[21]

## III

There are many Christian interpretations of the I-Thou philosophy. For Fison it implies that the significance of the sacrifice of the cross lies in a two-way and reciprocal action in which God on the cross gave and received all. For Friedrich Gogarten it implies that God must be worshiped in the form of Christ, for only this form makes God sufficiently real as a Thou. For Romano Guardini it implies that Christ, through his perfect I-Thou relation with God, shows us the way to God, and for Barth it implies that Christ as the son of God has a perfect I-Thou relation with men, while men, being sinners against God, unfold their existence in opposition and closedness to the Thou.[22]

For Buber, in contrast, the I-Thou philosophy implies that God becomes an absolute person—an unknown and sometimes hiding God who cannot be limited to any one manifestation and, hence, cannot be understood as having become incarnate in Christ.[23] On the other hand, Buber has recognized and pointed to the tremendous religious significance of Jesus as possibly no Jew has heretofore done while remaining firmly planted on the soil of Judaism. Buber wrote of Jesus in 1950:

> From my youth onwards I have found in Jesus my great brother. That Christianity has regarded and does regard him as God and Saviour has always appeared to me a fact of the highest importance which, for his sake and my own, I must endeavour to understand. . . . My own fraternally open relationship to him has grown ever stronger and clearer, and to-day I see him

21. Martin Buber, *Eclipse of God* (New York, 1952), pp. 140 f.

22. Fison, *op. cit.*, pp. 196-202; Gogarten, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-88; Romano Guardini, *Welt und Person* (Würzburg, 1950), 3rd ed., pp. 114-26; Barth, *op. cit.*, pp. 265-72.

23. Buber, *The Prophetic Faith* (New York, 1949), and *Two Types of Faith* (London, 1951), especially pp. 38 f.

more strongly and clearly than ever before. I am more than ever certain that a great place belongs to him in Israel's history of faith and that this place cannot be described by any of the usual categories.[24]

Buber's forty years of concern with Jesus and Jesus' significance for Jewish messianism have culminated in a study of Jesus and Paul, in *Two Types of Faith,* which cannot fail to be of great significance in both furthering and clarifying the relation between Judaism and Christianity. In this book he identifies faith as trust *(emunah)* with Biblical and Pharasaic Judaism and the teachings of Jesus; faith in the truth of a proposition *(pistis)* with Greek thought and Paulinism. Jesus taught "that unconditional trust in the grace which makes a person no longer afraid even of death because death is also of grace."[25] Paul and John, in contrast, made faith in Christ *(pistis)* the one door to salvation. This meant the abolition of the immediacy between God and man which had been the essence of the Biblical Covenant:

"I am the door" it now runs (John x.9); it avails nothing, as Jesus thought, to knock where one stands (before the "narrow door"); it avails nothing, as the Pharisees thought, to step into the open door; entrance is only for those who believe in "the door."[26]

The Jewish position, according to Buber, regards the fulfillment of the divine command as valid when it takes place in conformity with the full capacity of the person, whereas Jesus demands that the person go beyond what would ordinarily be his full capacity in order to be ready to enter the Kingdom of God which draws near. Apart from this difference, Jesus' attitude toward the fulfillment of the commandments is essentially the same as the Jewish position. Both agree that the heart of man is by nature without direction and that "there is no true direction except to God." They also agree in the belief that God has given man the Torah as instruction to teach him to direct his heart to Him. The Torah is not an objective law independent of man's actual relationship to God: it bestows life only on those who receive it in association with its Giver, and for His sake:[27]

24. *Two Types of Faith,* pp. 12 f.
25. *Ibid.,* pp. 96 f.
26. *Ibid.,* p. 160.
27. *Ibid.,* pp. 60-65, 79, 94, 136 f.

A vestige of the actual speaking always adheres to the commanding word. . . . For the actuality of the faith of Biblical and post-Biblical Judaism, and also for the Jesus of the Sermon on the Mount, fulfilment of the Torah means to extend the hearing of the Word to the whole dimension of human existence.[28]

This dialogical quality of the Torah is endangered by the hardening process which brought Torah near the conception of law as an objective possession of Israel, and which thereafter tends to supplant the vital contact with the ever-living revelation and instruction. The struggle against this tendency to make the keeping of rules independent of the surrender to the divine will runs through the whole history of Israelite-Jewish faith. Within this struggle of faith the teaching of Jesus as expressed in the Sermon on the Mount has an especial significance which can only be understood by seeing Jesus apart from his historical connection with Christianity.[29]

Paul, in contrast to Jesus, represents a decided turning away from the Biblical conception of the immediacy between God and man. He posits a dualism between faith and action based on a belief in the impossibility of the fulfillment of the law. Law, as he here conceives it, is necessarily external; it derives from the Greek conception of an *objectivum* and is foreign to the Jewish understanding of Torah as instruction. This external law makes all men sinners before God, but man can be saved from this dilemma by faith in Christ. This faith, however, is not the Jewish *emunah* but the Greek *pistis*.[30]

Faith in the immediacy between man and God is further destroyed through Paul's strong tendency to split off God's wrath and His mercy into two separate powers. Jesus retained the basic Jewish view that creation was good; Paul, in contrast, tended toward an essentially Gnostic dualism which saw creation as evil until redeemed from above. He regards the world as given over to the power of judgment until the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ bring mercy and redemption, and he regards man as by nature evil and as incapable of receiving pardon from God until the advent of Christ.[31] Buber's passionate opposition to this point of view can be seen in his discussion of the modern expression of Paulinism in Emil Brunner's *The Mediator:* "In the

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 56 ff.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 58 f.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 7 f., 11 f., 36-57, 79 f.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 47, 81 ff., 85-90, 131-34, 137-42, 146-50.

immediacy we experience His anger and His tenderness in one," writes Buber. "No assertion can detach one from the other and make Him into a God of wrath Who requires a mediator."[32]

IV

It is not surprising that Christian theologians should have given a more dualistic cast to the I-Thou philosophy than Buber has. It is important that we be aware that this difference exists, however, for Buber's attitude toward evil is an integral part of his dialogical philosophy and cannot be divorced from that philosophy without radically transforming it. The serious consequences of the failure to recognize this transformation are clearly illustrated in one of the most influential of recent books on Judaism, Will Herberg's *Judaism and Modern Man.* Herberg distinguishes between the Greco-Oriental and the Hebrew-Christian world views, and he does so largely on the basis of their attitudes toward evil. Yet he fails to recognize the important difference in the attitude toward evil of Judaism and Christianity. The reason for this failure is in part the joint influence of Reinhold Niebuhr, Buber, and Rosenzweig, which he acknowledges in his foreword, and probably also a tendency to merge Buber's I-Thou philosophy with that of the crisis theologians.

Herberg quotes Buber many times in each chapter and far more than any other writer. In acknowledgment of this influence he writes:

> To Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig, I owe not only my basic "existentialist" approach but also—and here I can never sufficiently express my gratitude—my understanding of how to establish my religious existence in Jewish terms in the modern world.[33]

Yet Herberg again and again expresses an attitude toward evil which is incompatible with Buber's philosophy and with Judaism as Buber interprets it. Buber, for example, has consistently emphasized the reciprocity of the relationship between man and God as the basic Biblical view. Herberg, in clear contrast, writes: "Between the Creator God and the world that is his creation there is a vast gulf that can be bridged only from the side of the divine. . . ." He speaks in another place of the "exaltation of the absolute sovereignty of God and the unrelieved em-

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 163 f.
33. *Judaism and Modern Man* (New York, 1951), p. x.

phasis on man's utter subjection and dependence" as "so characteristic of Hebraic spirituality."[34] A similar radical divergence, both from Buber's I-Thou philosophy and from his interpretation of Judaism, enters into Herberg's constant emphasis on the sinfulness, perversity, and unworthiness of man. He speaks of judgment, sin, and grace, in fact, in strikingly Protestant terms. "The righteousness of God," he writes, "places all our enterprises, all our ideas, interests and activities, under a pitiless and inescapable judgment."[35] Even though sin is not natural, we cannot escape it ourselves, he says, but only through grace:

> In idea, the self is capable of achieving a position in which its own anxieties and interests are transcended, but when idea gives way to action, the self always manages to insinuate itself again at the heart of the enterprise. . . . The dominion of sin can only be broken by a power not our own, the power of divine grace.[36]

A corollary of this view is the same either-or of I *or* Thou that we have seen in Gogarten, Cullberg, and Heim: "In the last analysis, the choice is only between love of God and love of self, between a *God*-centered and *self*-centered existence." As a result, Herberg describes Jewish ethics as "an ethic of perfection," in marked contrast to Buber's "*quantum satis*." "Its goal and standard," Herberg writes, "is nothing short of the perfect love of God and the perfect imitation of his ways."[37] It is just this ethic of perfection, as we have seen, that Buber attributes to Jesus as a result of his eschatological faith, whereas Judaism, in his opinion, starts from the actuality of the acting individuals and recognizes the limitations of their ability.

## V

The attempt which has been made here to point out the differences between Buber's thought and that of the Christian thinkers who have adopted the I-Thou philosophy in no way implies a minimization of the very great similarities that exist between these religious leaders of different faiths. On the contrary, it presupposes this similarity and begins with the situation in which the resemblances are so great that the

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 63-66.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 78; cf. pp. 72-79.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 96, 101 f.

differences are often overlooked or obscured. Even where there are important differences, moreover, they have contributed to the very fruitfulness of the dialogue—the *Gegenüberstehen,* or "overagainstness," which includes real "otherness" without antagonism. This has been particularly true of Buber's own friendships with a number of eminent Christian thinkers, such as Paul Tillich, Rudolf Bultmann, Albert Schweitzer, Rudolph Otto, and Leonhard Ragaz. In the Preface to *Two Types of Faith,* Buber thanks in particular Bultmann, Schweitzer, Otto, and Ragaz for the understanding of Christianity which they have given him in personal conversation as well as in their writings. In an address in Jerusalem commemorating Ragaz, his great Christian socialist friend, Buber made perhaps his most concise and impassioned statement of the place of Jesus in the Jewish community, a statement which shows at once the sympathy and the "otherness" which have marked his dialogue with his Christian friends:

> I firmly believe that the Jewish community, in the course of its renaissance, will recognize Jesus; and not merely as a great figure in its religious history, but also in the organic context of a Messianic development extending over millennia, whose final goal is the Redemption of Israel and of the world. But I believe equally firmly that we will never recognize Jesus as the Messiah Come, for this would contradict the deepest meaning of our Messianic passion. . . . There are no knots in the mighty cable of our Messianic belief, which, fastened to a rock on Sinai stretches to a still invisible peg anchored in the foundations of the world. In our view, redemption occurs forever, and none has yet occurred. Standing, bound and shackled, in the pillory of mankind, we demonstrate with the bloody body of our people the unredeemedness of the world. For us there is no cause of Jesus; only the cause of God exists for us.[38]

38. Quoted in Ernst Simon, "Martin Buber: His Way Between Thought and Deed" (on Buber's 70th anniversary), *Jewish Frontier,* XV (February, 1948), 26.

# THE TERM RELIGION AS A CONVENTIONAL SYMBOL

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As has been frequently pointed out, there are almost as many formal definitions of religion as there are works in the field of religion. Likewise, instructors in religion are frequently at variance with their textbooks at this one point, if at no other, so that the number of formal definitions of religion current at the present time must be considerable. The need for a formal definition is logically defensible as providing a criterion for distinguishing the religious behavior from the non-religious behavior of individuals and groups. Any study, for reasons of economy and intent, must be selective, and it is only fair to let the student know in advance why some behavior is chosen while other behavior is excluded; thus the definition.

This paper is not written in order to present another definition of religion, but a number of questions concerning the practice of introducing formal definitions will be raised. The questions will be treated in the following order: (1) Are the definitions intended to be anything more than highly suggestive and arresting poetic expressions? (2) Does the construction of a formally precise basic terminology in advance meet the practical need to delineate a field of study? (3) Is it possible to provide useful, formal definitions for terms such as religion, magic, liberty, and democracy?

Questions one and two will receive only brief treatment, for it is question three which is the primary concern of this paper. By way of a partial answer to question three, it may be stated in advance that any problem which can be solved merely by a formal definition was only a verbal problem in the first place.

In answer to question one, it may be said, in the first place, that no effort will be made here to uncover the real intent of the authors, but there are some definitions which, for the uninitiated, can only be considered as poetic expressions. Schleiermacher's definition of religion as a feeling of "absolute dependence" may be taken in this way only by anyone who does not know it to be true intuitively. Likewise Whitehead's "Religion is what the individual does with his own solitariness,"

and Dewey's "Whatever introduces genuine perspective is religious," may be taken as poetic expressions, though they do not necessarily rest on intuitive knowledge. It would seem that the last two were not thought of as definitions in the formal sense, but statements in answer to some such unasked question as, "What would be another novel and interesting vantage point from which to view that phenomenon commonly termed religious?" In so far as the authors mentioned above intended their definitions to be taken seriously and literally, they may be understood to be treated, though not named specifically, under questions two and three. Just as it is obvious that some authors intended their definitions to be taken poetically, it is also obvious that others did not. However, as will be shown later, that is the only useful way in which a short, formal definition may be understood.

Question two is concerned with whether or not the construction of a formally precise basic terminology does, in fact, meet the practical need to delineate a field of study. This can only be answered definitively by an exhaustive and detailed reference to specific works, an undertaking which might be worth the time and effort expended, but one which will not be attempted here. Rather, it will merely be suggested that the practical criterion determining the content of most works on the philosophy of religion is not the formal definition, but convention. Authors who disagree violently concerning a formal definition may, nevertheless, devote the balance of their respective works to approximately the same type of phenomenon. The formal definitions are seldom stated in such a way that they can be tested. The practice of referring to them as tentative hypotheses does not make them so, for hypotheses can be either affirmed or denied by subsequent investigations.

If the formal definition is to have any value whatsoever, it should at least aid the author in the delineation of his field. If it does not do this, then it may well be asked why formal definitions are employed, and the only answer that can be given is that the practice itself is a matter of custom and convention. Little serious injury would be done to most works in the philosophy of religion if the formal definitions were removed. The short, formal definition of religion is begging the question, and it is based upon an assumption which few empirical philosophies of religion adhere to in practice.

This leads directly to question three, a consideration of whether or

not it is useful to provide a formal definition of religion. It might be said in passing that what is said here concerning religion would also be true of such terms as magic, liberty, and democracy. Perhaps the most complete discussion of this problem is to be found in Vergilius Ferm's *First Chapters in Religious Philosophy*. As have many other authors, Professor Ferm argues for terminological precision before beginning his study in the philosophy of religion and, with this in mind, devotes some seventy-one pages to the construction of an exacting definition of religion.[1] Professor Peter Bertocci, in his *Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion,* likewise presents a short definition of religion in which he names the essence of religion.[2]

The assumption of Professor Ferm's and Professor Bertocci's definitions and the assumption in other short, formal definitions is that true religion has a core or essence and that the term religion has been defined when that essence has been named. Thus, in place of the phrase "formal definition," "essential definition" may be used. In *The Open Society and Its Enemies,* Karl Popper has outlined an alternative theory which is pertinent to the problem here and, at the same time, is a criticism of the traditional essential definitions. The use of Popper's theory would go a long way toward achieving the precision which the formal definitions purport to achieve.[3] The essential definition errs in taking the term religion too seriously, and not merely as a sign or a token which has been used to designate certain behavior. Regardless of their preoccupation with essential definitions, it is the factual data, in this instance a particular type of human behavior, with which most contemporary students of religion are concerned. Yet, because of its rich connotation, for many the word may become an entity, an entity with a core or essence which can be named in a few well chosen words. The few words are signficant; every effort is made to use only one sentence, even if it

1. "To be religious is to effect in some way and in some measure a vital adjustment (however tentative and incomplete) to w(W)hatever is reacted to or regarded implicitly or explicitly as worthy of serious and ulterior concern" (p. 61).

2. "The essence or core of religion is the personal belief that one's most important values are sponsored by, or in harmony with, the enduring structure of the universe, whether they are sponsored by society or not" (p. 9).

3. Without referring further to Popper, the term religion will be treated with his theory in mind. However, he is not to be held accountable for any misapplications which might be made. Cf. pp. 206-18, 621-38.

means sprinkling it liberally with prepositions, connectives, commas, parentheses, and italicized terms.

In such an attempt it is almost inevitable that the defining terms will be just as question-begging as the term defined. But if this objection is made, it is always answered that such a procedure would lead to an infinite regress, an objection which is all too true. Such terms and phrases as "duties," "infinite," "absolute dependence," "vital adjustment," "values," "genuine perspective," and divine powers" must, in turn, be defined. Any student who has given them serious consideration knows this, but he also knows that he would only be inviting the above objection and that it is unanswerable. Thus, he accepts the original definition or, and this is the more probable, he institutes a new one. In the latter case, since the terms of his own choice reflect his experiences, he believes that he has introduced clarity and avoided the mistakes of others. When an individual uses such terms, he knows what *he* means by them; it is when he hears another use them that he begins to ponder their meaning, and this for a very good reason. Previous discomfiting experiences have warned him that others have not applied familiar labels to his experiences. However, when he institutes a new definition, he is misled into believing that his terms will not be question-begging for others, and so the circle is completed.

The only relevant question regarding the use of the term religion is the question of whether or not it would be a practical abbreviation for the behavior under study. It may well be that this can only be decided tentatively for limited groups who know both the history of the term and the particular behavior under study. The term religion is a convenient way of cutting a long story short and has no more essential meaning that the *ibid.* and *op. cit.* references as they are used in footnotes. Thus it is just as unimportant to know what it "means" as it is to know that *ibid.* is an abbreviation for *ibidem* and that *op. cit.* is an abbreviation for *opere citato*. They are convenient abbreviations that stand for the publication in question; the fact that their usage has changed somewhat with time and that they are not used in quite the same way they were used in the Latin tongue is trivial. The particular arrangement of characters is as useful now as it was originally. In saying that "words change their meaning," it is usually meant that different labels are being applied to the same phenomenon; however, if everyone concerned

knows of the change, they are as useful in the one instance as in the other.

As long as the student is convinced that precision in initial definitions will avoid further amplification and dispute, there can be nothing but confusion and frustration. The practice of applying rigorous methods in an attempt to achieve terminological precision by naming the essence of a term places a burden on the defining terms which they cannot bear and were not intended to bear. It is a practice which ignores the conventional history of labels, not necessarily what they have "meant" in the past, but rather, the purposes for which they were coined and used. Likewise, such a practice ignores the elasticity and propensity for slippage in the carefully chosen defining terms. The reader who takes a second look is usually justified in noting that the defining terms are being used in a novel way and, furthermore, that the definition is true only if it is tautological and therefore trivial.

By way of analogy, it may be helpful to compare two familiar contexts in which language is used. The first is the method used in the preparation of an important public document, say for instance, the U. S. Constitution; the second is the method used when one friend is describing an interesting experience to another. In the former case the terms are chosen with extreme care while, in the latter, they are tried and abandoned with relative indifference. While in the latter case words may be quite useful tools, in the former they approach triviality. To press the analogy further and make it more specific, it might be suggested that the U. S. Constitution is more useful when it is understood to be a shorthand symbol for the numerous decisions handed down by the U. S. Supreme Court than when it is understood as a document with an essential core of meaning. The decision to provide for its alteration, amplification, and application was motivated, in part, by the recognition that such a document would necessarily overburden the words employed.

Terminological precision, unlike the instrumental precision of the natural sciences, cannot be gained through the use of some academic grindstone. It can be gained only by resorting to the overlapping, the common experiences, which can be verbalized by the simple expedient of agreeing upon a label, a shorthand mark, sign, token, or symbol. It can be gained only by the long and arduous task of relating the long story, by the frequent resort to comparisons, examples, analogies, metaphors, and further expansion. Exactness is more a matter of cheap and

easy communication, supplemented with a willingness to experiment with labels, than it is a matter of always choosing the "right" words the first time. Where there is mutual trust, sympathy, and a common recognition of the tricks words play upon the most well-intentioned, this is not as difficult as it may sound.

A considerable degree of professional prestige is involved here; traditional academic training, drawing upon the methodology of Aristotle, is such that when someone is asked to rephrase a statement and choose other words he accepts it as an implied criticism. It is assumed that if the initial statement had been sufficiently precise, the request would have been unnecessary. Another aspect of the same problem is that, when a statement has been rephrased by a group in discussion, it is the property of no one, and in spite of the fact that it may be much clearer, it taxes the professional ego. However, just as patents are seldom taken out today in the name of individual inventors, but rather by corporations hiring hundreds of technicians, so there likewise may come a time when scholars will sacrifice personal prestige for progress in clarity.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century the phenomenon symbolized by the term religion was suddenly expanded to gigantic proportions. It was used not only to denote other cultural traditions such as Shinto, Buddhism, etc., but, at the same time, it was used to denote particular types of behavior in many less advanced cultures. Studies in comparative and primitive religions were introduced, and instances of similarity were noted.

No sooner had such studies been undertaken than a whole host of problems presented themselves, problems which became of the utmost concern in subsequent literature. One such typical problem was that of deciding whether or not the "primitive origins" had determined contemporary religious behavior. Happily, for most, this has long since been decided on other grounds, but the point to be made here is that it need not have occurred at all. When a label that has been used to denote a particular type of behavior also is used to denote what appears to be similar behavior in another culture, this does not mean that, by this act alone, a cause and effect relationship has been established. It is merely the extension of a label, a label which neither adds to nor subtracts from the knowledge of the behavior in question. Only when it is believed that there is some essential meaning, that true religion possesses a fundamental core, or that it is a self-evident entity, only then can such

a problem arise. Otherwise the only problem is whether or not there is enough similarity to justify the use of the label. This can be decided by each student after he has heard a description of the relevant phenomena; it is the phenomena, not the label which are significant. Thus the use of the term by the early authors in the field added no new knowledge or proof; it was and is nothing more than a proposal to use a term in a certain way. It certainly does not mean, in itself, that there is some golden thread of continuity binding the two areas of cultural behavior in history. This is nothing more or less than the practice of attributing to the label the characteristics of the entity designated, a type of word magic.

The empiricist is contradicting himself when he uses analytical deduction to distinguish between religious and non-religious behavior. Such efforts can only lead to fruitless discussions, such as whether or not humanism is a "true religion." The only relevant question here is whether or not, for purposes of a particular problem, every one agrees to the label; but thereby you neither add to nor subtract from the behavior of those who call themselves humanists, nor do you know more about that behavior.

A similar problem may arise in pressing for a distinction between normative and descriptive definitions, two terms which are frequently overburdened. Every novel, short definition is normative in the sense that it is a proposal to use a word in a way that it has never been used before. If some of the proposed short definitions of religion included the term "ought," they would be much less confusing and more candid, although not necessarily any more useful.

The practice of employing essential definitions draws the student's attention away from the phenomena in which he was interested originally and focusses it upon a label; he may even believe that he has imparted new information when he has given a precise definition. Such definitions, unyielding in the face of reason and discussion, give an arbitrary token the status of a priori truth.

In the discussion of question one, the terminology of Schleiermacher was mentioned. Both Bergson and Otto join Schleiermacher in agreeing that religion may be defined in essential terms; as knowledge that is intuitive and immediate, it is presented on a take it or leave it basis. Thus, for the person who has not had the experiences which they describe, their language must remain esoteric and can only be valued for

its poetic suggestiveness. However, for those who are in complete agreement and have access to such knowledge, the essential definition may be relevant and even helpful. At least, there is new knowledge to be imparted.

It is those who claim to have presented an empirical philosophy of religion who are the particular concern of this paper. In introducing an essential definition of religion, they have presupposed a type of knowledge which they in fact deny, an intuitive, self-evident, a priori knowledge.

By way of summary, the above questions may be answered in the following manner: (1) For the empiricist, short definitions of religion are useful only when considered as poetic expressions, whether or not the author intended them to be taken in this way. (2) Their usefuless as criteria is highly questionable; it is convention which determines the content of most philosophies of religion. (3) This may be answered from two points of view: (a) The essential definition presupposes a priori truth and is consistent with any a priori philosophy, though the defining terms are hard pressed to bridge the void between the given and the empirical knowledge; (b) The empiricist employing the method of trial and error gains little by defending the true meanings of his terms, for he can always fall back upon the long story for elucidation.

*The Cotton-Clad Mila: The Tibetan Poet-Saint's Life in Pictures.* By Toni Schmid. Stockholm: Statens Etnografiska Museum, 1952. 126 pp. 30 plates. Kr. 87.

This magnificent volume, published in English, is Publication 36 in a series of separate studies edited by Dr. Gösta Montell, entitled: "Reports from the Scientific Expedition to the North-Western Provinces of China under the Leadership of Dr. Sven Hedin." In it a rare set of nineteen lamaistic paintings, which illustrate in miniature scenes the principal events in the life of the most famous Buddhist saint in Tibetan history, are beautifully reproduced in sepia monochrome plates, and one in color. They are described and correlated with chapters in the Tibetan text of the saint's biography, also with the volume of his metrical compositions. The term lamaistic is used here to designate religious paintings in the sacred, traditional style of Tibet, because the painter, almost always anonymous, is not necessarily a Tibetan. He may be Indian, Chinese, or Mongol.

There is a considerable amount of source material about the life of Milaraspa[1] (pronounced Mila reba) upon which the nineteen paintings are based. Block-printed copies of the biography in Tibetan text are available in the university libraries of Chicago, Columbia, and Yale; another in the Library of Congress; and a manuscript edition in the Tibetan collection at Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey. A French translation by Professor Jacques Bacot, published in 1925, and an English translation by Dr. G. Y. Evans-Wentz, published in 1928, are the two chief sources in European languages. The author's bibliography lists other translations of important chapters and sections. A few individual paintings of St. Mila surrounded by a selection of miniature scenes from his life have been reproduced elsewhere in publications devoted to the subject of Buddhist art. Now, for the first time, we can study the order of events as they occur in the biography of this eleventh century Himalayan ascetic in an almost innumerable series of miniature scenes.

The nineteen temple paintings which form a continuous picture series are designed and numbered so that the introductory one hangs in the center, with nine on the left and nine on the right hand sides.

1. *Raspa* means "cotton clad."

The composition of each painting follows a traditional iconographical pattern: a large figure of the saint surrounded by miniature scenes in which he and other important personages in his biography appear. The purpose of any lamaistic painting is functional, not aesthetic, i.e., to communicate religious ideas. Whatever aesthetic value it may possess is incidental; the painter, working within the prescribed limitations of a canonical tradition, need only be an accomplished craftsman. This does not imply that a creative artist would not receive appreciation, but he would have to be satisfied to work in a conventional groove. Originality for its own sake is not encouraged. Then, analogously, just as the mission of a stained glass window is to serve in the Christian church the visual needs of the devout, especially those who may be unlettered, so does the hanging banner painting perform the same function in a lama temple or personal shrine. Christian and Buddhist traditions both employ the formal technique of outline and opaque color; both indicate extraordinary sanctity with a nimbus. Pious craftsmen in both traditions more often than not work impersonally and anonymously to glorify their respective religions.

In the important central painting, which shows the apostolic succession of hierarchs including St. Mila glorified with a nimbus, one iconographic detail is worthy of more than passing mention. The Primordial Deity (or Cosmic Principle) of the hierarchy is represented by an image whose name, *Dorje Chang* signifies "Holder of the Adamantine Sceptre." The body of this holy image is painted blue to symbolize "His immutability and the eternity of His existence, for it is like the blue of the eternal heavenly sky" (Evans-Wentz).

"Cotton-clad Mila," who was destined by his own efforts to become a national saint and poet, started out in life as a notorious and, as we shall see, revengeful sinner. He was born in A.D. 1052 in the Tibetan village of Kyanga-tsa, north of Mt. Everest. As we follow the order of events revealed in the miniature scenes, we see the father dying when Mila was a boy of seven. Mila, his mother and sister were cheated of their inheritance by a wicked aunt and uncle, who claimed it under false pretenses and forced Mila's family into drudgery and misery. We then see his mother; brooding on vengeance against these faithless trustees, she easily persuades her obedient and impressionable son to become the disciple of a local sorcerer. After mastering the esoteric ritual for destroying life, Mila at about the age of seventeen, causes the death of

thirty-five relatives of his dishonest uncle and aunt, who were spared death that they might suffer longer. Still the mother is not satisfied, and at her wish Mila continues with his studies in magic until he is able to launch a hailstorm which destroys the crops of his enemies. He escapes from his pursuers by hiding in a cave. The revenge is complete.

But now Mila feels no elation over his success; with the realization that he is now burdened with a veritable mountain of "black deeds" comes the turning point in his life. He repents and yearns for a new life, then sets out in search of a spiritual preceptor who will guide him on the "path to saintly perfection." The biographical scenes continue, showing Mila's unwavering obedience in fulfilling the commands of his gifted tutor, the celebrated Lama Marpa, who makes his new disciple undergo a series of extraordinarily severe penances. Unaided, Mila patiently builds and demolishes, one by one, several houses of stone in partial expiation for his vengeful thoughts and sinful acts. He dedicated his life to the attainment of the Highest Goal; and through compassion for all creatures, by meditation and ascetic practices he eventually became, possibly, one of the greatest religious geniuses in the history of mankind. He died in 1135, having reached the age of eighty-four, surrounded by his faithful disciples, honored by all.

The author, an uncommon scholar indeed, has brought to this study the unusual combination of Tibetan philology plus an extensive knowledge of Christian hagiography. Possessor of two earned doctorates, from Vienna and Lund Universities, Dr. Toni (Antonia) Elisabeth Magdalena Schmid is well known in Europe as a specialist in medieval Latin, whose published material on the Christian saints includes St. Bridget and St. Sigfrid. Research in this field has led the author to an interest in the phenomena of saintliness in Tibetan Buddhist literature.

A miniature scene in the biography shows Mila preaching and chanting to the birds who inhabit the Himalayan slopes surrounding his cave. A similar compassionate attitude toward animals and birds in the life of St. Francis of Assisi would indicate, with other parallels, that there is ample research material available to anyone interested in preparing a treatise on the analogous elements to be found in the biographies of Christian and Buddhist saints.

Altogether, this book is a significant and rare contribution to the study of comparative religion and hagiography. In addition, students of

Buddhist art and iconography can benefit by a careful study of the meticulously drawn details and stylized iconographic technique, which shows so clearly a happy blending of Indian and Chinese elements but ever retains its persistent lamaistic character. Historians and anthropologists may gain from this book an exceptional understanding of the people who lived in Tibet while England was enduring the effects of the Norman Conquest. For others, it may be a fascinating introduction to Tibet and the Tibetan attitude towards life, death, religion, sin, compassion, and wisdom.

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*Kings and Prophets of Israel.* By ADAM C. WELCH. Edited by NORMAN E. PORTEOUS, with a Memoir by GEORGE S. GUNN. New York: Philosophical Library, 1952. 264 pp. $4.75.

This book is the posthumous publication of the deeply respected professor of Old Testament at New College, Edinburgh. It consists of a paper on Moses originally prepared for reading to a theological club and of lectures on the history of Israel's religion delivered to students at New College. As such the lectures are selective in the personalities which they consider: Moses, Saul, David, Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah. In this respect the book differs from historical works such as Oesterley and Robinson's two volume *A History of Israel.*

The first chapter, "Moses in the Old Testament Tradition," builds upon the foundation of the documentary hypothesis. We see emerging two figures of Moses: the one, dated at the time of the return from Exile and characterized as the law-giver; the other, dated as contemporary with the historic Moses and characterized as the interceder with God and the deliverer from God's punishment. Welch concludes that Moses the man is the deliverer, who at Midian intercedes with God on behalf of the people, while the figure of Moses as law-giver is the depiction by priests in post-exilic times.

The only suggestion of a critical analysis of the sources themselves is presented in the second chapter, "Saul." Here, like Henry S. Smith in his study of the book of Isaiah in the *ICC,* Welch divides I Samuel, the main source for his lecture, into two sections. He couples 8:1-22 with 10:17-24, comparing them with chapters 7 and 12, as exilic in origin.

Chapters 9:1-27 (not vs. 9), 10:1-16 (not vs. 8), and 11:1-11, 15; 13 are listed as contemporary with I Samuel 1-3 at the time of the historic Samuel. In other words, Welch follows the results of modern criticism. The rest of his lecture reads almost like a novel. It is, however, a careful and historical interpretation of the events which led to the consolidation of the kingdom under Saul. The reader feels himself drawn into an eye-witness account of the battles with the Philistines along the plain of Sharon. Saul, the man who wrestled with fate and with circumstances which limited his destiny, may be counted as a failure according to the standards of the world, but to Welch, ". . . he leaves a new temper to the nation and a great example of how worthy a thing it is to die attempting what may prove, when all is done, to be beyond one's power" (p. 79).

Professor Welch admits a prejudice on his part against David (ch. 3), since things seem to come too easily for the king. Welch emphasizes the role of the ark in Jerusalem at this juncture in Israel's religious history. He points up the different kind of army under David, namely, that of hired soldiers whose loyalty is to the king rather than to the nation and to God. He stresses the fact that under David a new bureaucracy arises which leads to the high taxes, foreign trade, Temple ritual, Phoenician symbols in the Temple, and centralization under Solomon. He shows clearly the dangers which such a kingdom, without ethical standards, fosters, and he introduces the fact that the prophets speak to such dangers. He illustrates this point by maintaining that Nathan's protest to David's encounter with Bathsheba was not one against sexual irregularity alone, but against the overbearing interference with the rights of another man. To Welch this period of history in Palestine, the lowest so far as outward culture is concerned, nevertheless represents " . . . a mental vigour and a moral judgment which set it far above everything which the time produced" (p. 106).

The fourth chapter, "Amos," adds nothing new to the study of this prophet. The usual emphases upon the election of Israel, the chaotic conditions of the nations of the world, God sitting in judgment, and monotheism which extends to a universal religion are made. Little is said in any clear way of a biblical sociology which would emphasize the moral responsibility of all mankind before Yahweh. Apparently Welch considers the debateable passage, Amos 9:11-15, to be an integral part of the original preaching ministry of Amos, since nothing is said

to the contrary. Yet the comparison of the work of Amos with that of Hosea in chapter 5 is good. The reviewer agrees with Welch's thesis that Hosea married Gomer when she was an innocent girl and that she later left him for another man. Hosea is criticized by Welch, however, as trying to enforce a spiritual Israel upon a people capable only of an empirical realization (pp. 169-71).

In the concluding chapter, "Isaiah," Welch treats Isaiah 40 following as having no connection with the Isaiah of Jerusalem. In fact, he attributes to the historic Isaiah only chapters 1-11:10, 28-33. Welch interprets the hard words of Isaiah 6:9-10 by saying, "The prophet was there sadly recognizing one fact in human history and human experience which is summed up in our homely proverb: There are none so blind as those who *will* not see "(p. 205). No mention is made of Isaiah 7:14 in connection with 'almā or betūlā, but the name *Immanuel,* as in Karl Barth's treatment of its theological significance, is considered as indicative of God's abiding presence in Israel's history. Welch objects to the assumption that Isaiah was a superior type of statesman with a wider view than his fellows, on the grounds that such a contention would make God the tool of man, subject to his whim. The remnant idea is carefully considered, with the conclusion: "The stock of Jesse has been cut down, chastened, fearfully disciplined: but it has life in it. And all that is worthy in it shall be preserved to take its sure place in the world which does not pass away" (p. 256).

There are some inconsistencies in the transliteration of Hebrew words: Zebhaoth for *Ṣeba'ōt* (pp. 155, 208), mazzeba for maṣṣēbā (p. 179), kabhodh for ka*bōd*. Occasional misprints detract from the generally good editing, such as Yahveh for Yahweh (p. 66), the omission of a period (line 29, p. 161), etc. Yet this book is a good one for the reader who wants an interesting presentation of specific kings and prophets in Israel. Dr. Welch had the gift of entering into the heart of an event or passage of time in Israel's history and of making it alive and relevant to the contemporary scene. There is no new contribution to critical scholarship; this is not the purpose of the publication. In many ways his presentation reminds the reader of A. B. Davidson, for interpretation and Old Testament theology rather than intensive linguistic and critical evaluation are given. What we have here is a good example of popular lectures for those who lack technical preparation but who want to have concise, clear surveys of some of the great personalities in Israel's

history. As a contribution to this aim, Professor Porteous' editing has done good service for the lay reader.

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*Roman Sources of Christian Art.* By EMERSON H. SWIFT. New York: Columbia University Press, 1951. xx + 348 pp.; 45 pls.; 66 figs. $10.00.

In this large work Professor Swift returns to a question that has plagued archeologists and art historians for half a century: what were the sources of inspiration that shaped Christian art? More precisely, did the artistic vision which destroyed the canons of Greek classical art and eventually created medieval art receive its impetus from the Orient or from Rome? The author thinks, rightly I believe, that the role of the East has been exaggerated in the past. So, in an attempt to "redress the balance," he expounds what he considers the most important aspects of Roman art—the narrative and the illusionistic, colorism and frontality, the sense of space and the genius of architectural construction—and then goes on to show the survival of these elements in post-classical and post-antique art. Up to this point Dr. Swift's book is a summary, and a useful one at that, of the anti-"orientalist" argument as elaborated by Rivoira and many others during the last decades. But Dr. Swift goes much further than his predecessors in trying to show that nearly all the decisive elements of early Christian, and indeed of medieval, art are Roman by derivation. Not only is this thesis, as he himself admits, "highly controversial in many respects;" it entraps him in a twofold methodological error that vitiates much of his work.

The first of these flaws is the author's failure to provide the reader with a convincing and consistent definition of the term "Roman." In the course of the argument the term seems to denote three distinct and, in fact, conflicting things. When the Odyssey Landscapes are adduced as chief examples of "Roman" illusionism—an artistic achievement held to have remained beyond the scope of Greek art—"Roman" seems to mean art created on Italian soil;[1] and, indeed, even prehistoric Italian art is

1. It would seem that the Odyssey Landscapes occupy too important a place in Dr. Swift's argumentation in view of the fact that many archeologists assign these paintings to Greek rather than Roman art. In fact, P. H. v. Blanckenhagen, in a study now awaiting publication, will seek to prove that the Landscapes are copies after a frieze-like Greek composition now lost.

shown to have possessed certain characteristics later found in Roman art. Elsewhere, however (cf. p. 127), the term "Roman" seems to stand for "Western" and to include Greece. Eventually Dr. Swift describes as Roman "almost every work produced within the temporal and political boundaries of the Roman Empire," explaining that "an apposite and extremely telling analogy to all this is afforded by the artistic history of the United States of America whose assimilative capacity for immigrant peoples and foreign ideas of all sorts can justly be likened to that of Rome."

The analogy does not seem to me very telling. The history of Western art—like the history of civilization—in the first centuries of our era is determined by three factors: the influence of Rome, which has to contend with ancient and firmly established traditions in every part of the Mediterranean world under Roman domination; this Roman influence is exerted through vast artistic projects commissioned by the head of the state; finally, these projects are to be understood as visual expressions of an ideology—since the establishment of the Church under Constantine the Great, of a religion maintained and enforced by the state. These three factors—for which the history of art in America offers no analogy whatever—account for the gradual evoluton of an artistic style which it has become customary to define as "imperial." Many, though not all, of the ingredients of this Empire style are certainly Roman, but its official function as well as its ideological and religious motivations transformed even these ingredients. Hence it is impossible to understand the art of the Empire unless we consider its purpose and motivations. For Dr. Swift, however, these are non-existent. He considers Roman art an invariable. Its development, in the course of many centuries, exists for him only as the consistent, steady realization of pristine "Roman" canons, irresistibly propelled through all parts of the civilized world by Roman "prestige" and uninfluenced by the ideological revolution that occurred within the time span surveyed. This viewpoint condemns the author's interpretation to a onesidedness that often makes him overlook the most significant aspect of a work of art and constitutes the other basic flaw of his approach.

This becomes manifest in the very first chapter, "Pagan Ancestors of the Christian Basilica." Dr. Swift reviews different theories regarding this subject and concludes "it is hence generally agreed that . . . the basilican church of the early Christians is nothing more nor less than

the Western type of the Roman civil basilica." The statement is far from accurate. There is certainly no unanimity of opinion as regards the origin and models of the Christian basilica.[2] We cannot be certain that Rome played an exclusive part in its development, or even that the civil basilica proved a more influential prototype than other pagan structures. In his last work the late S. Guyer has once again called attention to the importance of Asia Minor,[3] pointing out, moreover, that it was not adherence to the pre-established basilican type but, on the contrary, the extreme freedom with which it was transformed in the Christian East that accounts for the development of Christian architecture. According to Dr. Swift, even Romanesque and Gothic are Roman except for "the infusion into them of the emotional, dynamic, and typically Northern spirit of those wild barbarian tribes." Guyer has adduced more solid and convincing reasons to support his thesis of the influence of Asia Minor upon Romanesque architecture.

But readers of the *Review of Religion* will hardly need to be convinced that the East-West controversy alone is unlikely to lead to the sources of Christian architecture. If we compare the Christian and the civil basilica we are struck by a number of basic differences. The civil basilica offers no precedent for either the transept or the disposition of the sanctuary (as to the latter theme, recent excavations of the Constantinian episcopal church at Trier—built since 326—suggest how much we may still have to learn).[4] And the sanctuary is not just an appendix to the basilica but rather a focus, the presence of which affects and transforms the esthetic structure of the entire edifice. These basic elements of style cannot be accounted for unless we consider the religious experience and the cult requirements of the newly established Church. On this aspect of his problem Dr. Swift touches lightly enough. He asserts at the beginning of the chapter that the basilican church "amply demonstrates that the broad foundation of the life and thought of the

2. See the summaries of papers read at the International Symposium on "Origins of the Christian Basilica," held at the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte in Munich, published in *Kunstchronik* IV, 1951. Also the article "Basilika" (with strong emphasis of possible Eastern sources) by E. Langlotz, in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* (Leipzig, 1939 ff.); and E. Mâle, *La fin du paganisme en Gaule et les plus anciennes basiliques chrétiennes* (Paris, 1950), pp. 110 ff. None of the works referred to in these notes are mentioned in Dr. Swift's book.

3. *Grundlagen mittelalterlicher abendlaendischer Baukunst* (Einsiedeln, 1950).

4. See the preliminary reports by Th. F. Kempf in *Trierer theol. Zeitschrift*, 56 (1948), and in *Forschungen und Fortschritte*, 26 (1950), 244 ff.

early Christians was essentially Roman, overlaid with a thin veneer of Oriental mysticism." What do we actually know about the intellectual background of Christian architecture?

About 313, on the morrow of his establishment of the Christian Church—and as the monumental symbol of this act—Constantine the Great commissioned the Lateran basilica, so far as we know the first of all basilican churches. The pre-Constantinian sanctuaries, those at Dura, at Rome, and at Aquileia, were definitely not of this type. The name "basilica" for a Christian church first occurs in Africa around 300, but the term denotes so wide a variety of architectural types that literary sources can hardly be used as clues to the exact structure. If we compare the Lateran basilica with older Christian churches known, we can only conclude that Constantine's architect created an entirely new type of sanctuary. Certainly, he did not invent it in a vacuum; he had before his eyes the civil basilicas of Rome; if he used them as models, the inventiveness by which he transformed the model into something new is all the more astonishing.

But was the architect of the Lateran basilica really so much influenced by the civil basilica? Two other types of basilican structure—the cult basilicas of several "Hellenistic" mystery religions, and the so-called throne basilicas that existed in every imperial palace—resemble the Christian edifice more strikingly than does the civil basilica. Constantine's palace "basilica" in Trier—best surviving example of its type—is remarkably similar in spirit to the religious sanctuaries founded by the Emperor. This affinity is all the more noteworthy in view of the undisputed influence which monarchical symbolism exerted upon the insignia, the ritual, and the arts of the Constantinian church.[5] Nowhere could such an evocation of the monarchical idea have been more appropriate than in the Lateran basilica. It adjoined the Lateran palace, which the Emperor, after his victory over Maxentius, had ceded to the Pope; both this gift and the building of the sanctuary belong to a series of great donations that were to provide at once the physical means and the symbolic expression of the extraordinary powers which Constantine had decided to bestow upon the Bishop of Rome. Alfoeldi has explored

5. See A. Alfoeldi, "Die Ausgestaltung des monarchischen Zeremoniells am roemischen Kaiserhofe," *Roemische Mitteilungen*, 49 (1934); *idem*, "Insignien und Tracht der roemischen Kaiser," *ibid.*, 50 (1935); also Th. Klauser, "Der Ursprung der bischoeflichen Insignien und Ehrenrechte," *Bonner akademische Reden*, I (1948).

the momentous political considerations that prompted the Emperor to "transfer the apparatus of imperial display" to the Lateran basilica. Constantine himself stated in a dedicatory inscription that he "is minded to pass on the glory of the imperial court to the chief church of the capital."[6] Obviously the architect could have conveyed this idea more effectively by alluding, in the design of the Lateran church, to a throne basilica rather than to a civil basilica, which carried no appropriate symbolic significance. However that may be, no possible prototype can really explain the first Christian basilica, "one of the epoch-making inventions in architectural history and indeed in the history of religious expression" (Deichmann). But if we ask for the sources from which its architect, like any great artist, drew his inspiration, we must explore the idea he had to convey. Possible models are not the sources of his creation but, at most, the medium in which he embodied it.

Dr. Swift's onesidedness of approach and interpretation is equally apparent in the second chapter, which seeks to trace all churches of central and cruciform ground plan to Roman prototypes. The importance of these for Christian architecture is undeniable and has often been stressed. But the author accepts every *post hoc* as a *propter hoc*, and considers even the most modest circular structures on Italian soil, some of them below ground, as legitimate "sources" even of the most highly developed buildings executed many centuries later. He thinks Greek circular buildings of classical times may have been influenced by the beehive tombs of Mycenae, but there is no mention of the highly significant suggestion of F. Robert that the Greek *tholos* is invariably connected with *chthonic* or funeral cults.[7] Again, we are told that Roman predilection for buildings of circular plan "might be expected from the appearance in prehistoric Italy of the circular hut-type." Whatever may be the value of such a "history" of architecture in terms of abstract forms that have been stripped of their esthetic and symbolic significance, Dr. Swift's approach is especially regrettable in this particular instance, for the link of early Christan buildings of circular plan with Roman sources is more palpable than is that of the Christian

6. A. Alfoeldi, *The Conversion of Constantine* (Oxford, 1948), pp. 51 f. For affinities between palace and church architecture, cf. E. Dyggve, "Ravennatum Palatium Sacrum: La basilica ipetrale per ceremonie," *Det kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab. Archeol. Kunsthist. Meddelelser*, III, 2 (Copenhagen, 1947).

7. *Thymèlé, Recherches sur la signification et la destination des monuments circulaires dans l'architecture religieuse de la Grèce* (Paris, 1939).

basilica. Here again, however, it is not simply the prestige of a Roman prototype that accounts for the unbroken continuity of the tradition, but the unchanging symbolic relevance of the architectural pattern.[8] The most important group of Roman circular structures are the mausolea. The first imperial mausoleum, that of Augustus, was a deliberate revival, perhaps for ideological reasons,[9] of ancient Italic circular tombs. And where early Christian architects adopted the central plan, they intended to give symbolic expression to the sanctuary's character as a tomb. Scholars such as Grabar and Guyer have shown that the rich development of this type of sanctuary in the Christian East is inseparable from the role which the Christian hero, the martyr, played in the ritual and devotion of the Oriental Church. Even the design of a great Eastern cathedral like that of St. John's at Ephesus is determined by this religious factor.[10]

One regrets that the author's categories have caused him to overlook the one aspect of the artistic development of the third and fourth centuries that would have lent the strongest support to his general thesis regarding the Roman sources of Christian art: the re-emergence of a powerful current of popular or folk art which, in the age of Constantine the Great, conquers even the official art of the Empire.[11] Indeed, this trend produced the revival of ancient, indigenous tendencies, not exclusively Roman or even Italic, to be sure, but rather, as the investigations of Kaschnitz seem to indicate, originally the common property of nearly all Mediterranean races. Suppressed, for a relatively brief period, by the canons of classical Greek art, these ancient Italic elements re-emerge in late Roman art, a development, however, which

8. The buildings of Hadrian—the Pantheon, the Villa in Tivoli—play an important part in Swift's thesis. But are these structures really so traditionally Roman? H. Kaehler has recently remarked that "unter Hadrian Gedanken in die roemische Architektur eindringen die voellig neu sind, und zu deren Verwirklichung man wohl nicht Roemer sein durfte sondern Provinzialer sein musste." *Hadrian und seine Villa bei Tivoli* (Berlin, 1951), p. 91.

9. See E. Kornemann, "Das Augustus Mausoleum ein Romulusgrab," *Forschungen und Fortschritte*, 15 (1939). Dr. Swift does not speak of the Augustus mausoleum except to mention the marble facing of its exterior walls.

10. See H. Hoermann, *Forschungen in Ephesus*, iv, 3 (Wien, 1951), 304: "der Baumeister . . . liess den besonderen Charakter (as mausoleum and cathedral) zum Angelpunkt des gansen Systems werden."

11. G. Rodenwaldt, "Eine spaetantike Kunststroemung in Rom," *Roem. Mitt.*, 36/7 (1922/3); also the studies of G. v. Kaschnitz-Weinberg, esp. *Die mittelmeerischen Grundlagen der antiken Kunst* (Frankfurt, 1944).

marks not the continuation but rather the destruction of these classical canons as well as of Roman illusionism.

Early Christian painting and sculpture owe far more to that popular current than to the illusionism of the sophisticated creations of the Empire style. Once again esthetic structure is not entirely intelligible unless we also consider content and purpose of early Christian art. The main purpose of these sculptures and paintings was not the pictorial documentation of historical scenes but, rather, the evocation of sacred events conceived to be mystically present in the liturgical acts or prayers commemorating them.[12] Hence the scenes carved on Christian sarcophagi and depicted in the murals of the catacombs have not unjustly been compared to "visual prayers." This purpose rendered the naturalistic representation of spatial settings as meaningless as the lively narrative of action. Illusionism disappeared from early Christian art because it was iconographically and symbolically superfluous. Instead, we find an increasing tendency toward isolation and stereotyped, hieratic gesture, unintelligible as logical developments of "Roman" illusionism, but effective means of conveying the transcendental significance of the events depicted.[13] In the great series of mosaics in S. Maria Maggiore, in Rome, best preserved and most important of its kind and date, "sheer story telling" was certainly not a purpose. Nor do the mosaics follow, as Dr. Swift asserts, "exactly the sequence of events as described in the Book of Genesis." On the southern wall, for example, where the history of the Patriarchs is depicted, the biblical sequence of events has deliberately been changed so as to allow two scenes—the Visit of the Three Angels and Abraham and Melchisedech—to occupy the places on the wall that are next to the altar of the church. The onlooker is thus induced to relate the two scenes to the eucharistic sacrifice of which they were thought to be the mystical types. The symbolic significance also affected the composition of each individual panel. Illusionistic and narrative elements are still present, but they have been significantly subdued, most strongly in the most

12. Art historians have generally ignored the important studies of Dom Odo Casel. See esp. "Aelteste christliche Kunst und Christusmysterium," *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft,* XII (1932).

13. On the interrelation of intellectual and stylistic factors of late Roman art see E. Garger, "Untersuchungen zur roemischen Bildkomposition," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen,* N.F. 9 (1935). See also A. Grabar, "Plotin et les origines de l'esthétique médiévale," *Cahiers Archéologiques,* I (1945).

important scenes of the cycle (those placed on the triumphal arch), in favor of a solemn and novel mode of composition that appears most strikingly in the Melchisedech scene.[14] This stylistic trend—and its religious motivation—determines the development of Christian art for nearly a millenium.

Some factual errors remain to be noted. S. Costanza was built as the mausoleum for Constantina, Constantine the Great's daughter, not for Constantia, his sister. The mosaics of S. Maria Maggiore were executed during the second third of the fifth century rather than "not long after 360." Dr. Swift denies the ritual use of funeral exedrae by the early Christians (hence the possible impact of these structures on Christian architecture) on the grounds that "it is a mere hypothesis, unsupported by documents or sound archeological evidence," and "that no cellae are known to exist which antedate the fourth century." The author adds, "Although the early Christians undoubtedly possessed remarkable fortitude, we can scarcely imagine them content to worship outdoors in all sorts of weather." In point of fact, excavations have provided sound evidence for the assumption that the early Christians convened for ritual purposes at the tombs of their dead, and that these places were often marked by a cella or funerary apse placed in an open temenos. Such places of worship have been uncovered in Bonn (dating back to the end of the third century), in Dalmatia, in Rome itself, and elsewhere. Indeed, the recent excavations under St. Peter's have yielded the remains of an aedicula thought to be the tropaion mentioned by the Presbyter Gaius around A.D. 200, and apparently at an even earlier date the place where the Prince of the Apostles was commemorated. And in Kapljuč, near Salona, the open temenos surrounding a martyr's tomb was, at the end of the fourth century, replaced by a normal basilica of three aisles in such a way that the old memorial apse was kept intact except for the addition of a small prothesis and diaconicon.

On page 114, note 47, Dr. Swift remarks, "Grabar, *Martyrium* I, 197 ff. maintains that the early martyria in the Near East were derived from the sepulchral architecture of Rome." What Grabar actually says, to my mind the exact opposite, is worth quoting in conclusion:

> En ce qui concerne les martyria antiques, aucune opposition ne sépare donc l'Orient de l'Occident. On constate simplement dans la *pars orientalis,* plus rapprochée à la fois des sources de la vie religieuse chrétienne et de l'archi-

14. See F. W. Deichmann, *Fruehchristl. Kirchen Roms* (Basel, 1948), pp. 63 ff.

tecture hellénistique, une variété et une originalité plus grande dans le choix des formes et, je crois, plus de richesse dans l'exécution des monuments. . . . Les martyria les plus anciens ne nous mettent donc pas en présence d'un aspect particulier du fameux problème de l'opposition entre l'Orient et l'Occident. Les artistes chrétiens . . . puisent à la source commune qui est l'architecture hellénistique et provient en dernière analyse des provinces orientales de l'Empire. Rome et tout l'Occident les avaient acceptés depuis le I^e^ ou le II^e^ siècle de notre ère.

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*The Prosecution of John Wyclyf.* By Joseph H. Dahmus. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952. xi, 167 pp. $4.00.

It is one of the marks of a great man that subsequent history or historians should regard him as a fair object of minute examination. It may be friendly, or it may be unfriendly. John Wyclyf, on this basis, must be regarded as great. Not only was he attacked bitterly during his lifetime by the highest dignitaries of the organization of which he was a member—the Church—but his death did not bring peace to him or his work. Thomas Netter of Walden and Thomas Woodford, two highly trained clerics, spent years of minute—and fortunately quite valuable—work building up a case against the Oxford don whose ideas had so agitated the land. The name of Wyclyf has been a word to conjure with since then—the symbol of *heresis pestifera* wherever it has even been suspected of appearing.

Yet, quite aside from the attitudes with which a student approaches the person and work of the reformer, there remain many details of his career that call for careful and objective examination. The records of the time, the various chronicles of contemporaries or subcontemporaries—Knighton, Thomas Netter, Walsingham, and the monastic author of the *Chronicon Anglie,* the parliamentary reports, the episcopal registers and the college records in Oxford—are either unsatisfactory in their historical leanness or misleading in their partisanship. If to these be added the fact that Wyclyf's own voluminous writings (thus far only about three-fourths edited) contain very little autobiographical matter, and that couched in such vague terms as to be maddeningly unusable, it will be seen that any attempt to get at the final truth at controversial

points in the reformer's career is at the least formidable enough to challenge any historian's zeal.

Mr. Dahmus has chosen a single aspect of the career of Wyclyf for his investigation: his relations with the Church in the last seven years of his life. He has started from the quite laudable Cartesian assumption that nothing that has been written in recent years on the subject of Wyclyf's controversy with the English hierarchy may be assumed to be per se acceptable and that all the documents must be assiduously re-examined, and, because they do not always agree, reassessed.

The focal points of the investigation are the various synods or hearings at which Wyclyf was to appear or his teachings to be examined, his relations with John of Gaunt and the latter's motives in supporting or protecting the reformer, and the position taken by the government toward Wyclyf over these crucial years. The basic conclusions of the author are that Wyclyf was of less political importance than has previously been asserted; that the aristocracy leaned to his support and that the citizenry was disposed to support the establishment, that the government ordered Wyclyf to cease his attacks on the Church in 1378; and he brings crown policy closer to the wishes of the papacy than has sometimes been thought, and emphasizes the effect the election of Urban had upon Wyclyf's fortunes.

Some of these positions are cogently, even convincingly argued, and others are just argued. There are frequent points at which another construction of the few known facts in Wyclyf's own life, related to external circumstances, would be at least as convincing. There are other points upon which one would have to say that Mr. Dahmus' enthusiasm may have led him to see connections which may not have existed. There are still other conclusions upon which the critical reader would have to say that Workman's construction (1926) of the motives and personalities still holds the field.

In a few matters of detail minor objections might be voiced. Mr. Dahmus accepts "about 1330" for Wyclyf's birth. I know of no real evidence for so late a date. On page 14 he uses Wyclyf's *De Blasphemia* in reference to circumstances of 1377. The *De Blasphemia* should be assigned to 1381. The general incompetency of John Buckingham, Bishop of Lincoln, is assumed. He may not have been a great prelate, but he was not illiterate, if we may judge from his composition of a commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter the Lombard. Mr. Dahmus accuses Wy-

clyf of confusion in his teaching on the eucharist. This is not unnatural accusation, but quite unjustified. The usual equation of Wyclyf's teaching (as consubstantiation) with that of Luther is a gratuitous and misleading association. Wyclyf was a Realist, Luther an Occamist. That factual distinction should take care of any attempt to place their teachings on this delicate subject on the same plane. Several important studies that bear upon the matter of this book are missing from the bibliography: Gairdner's *Lollardy and the Reformation,* and Miss Deanesley's *The Lollard Bible.* Both bear significant witness to the widespread nature of the movement which Mr. Dahmus presents as so determinedly opposed and rather easily crushed by the hierarchy with the crisp support of the "government." A more recent study by L. Baudry in the *Archives d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale du Moyen Age,* XII (1939), "A propos de Guillaume d'Ockham et de Wiclef," in which he discusses a list of 46 *articuli erronei Johannis Wiclef* found in Paris MS. Lat. 14-619, would have been of interest for the various condemnations in London. Baudry concludes (p. 246): "aucun synode n'a condamné Wiclef en 1380."

There are several slight slips in bibliography. The 1690 edition of the *Fasciculus rerum expetendarum et fugiendarum* should be credited to Edward Brown, not Ortwin Gratius, whose collection came out in 1535. Trevelyan's undergraduate essay, *England in the Age of Wycliffe* appeared first in 1899. John Lewis' work on Wyclyf appeared first in 1720. The 1820 edition was a mere reprint with a few marginal additions from Lewis' own annotated copy.

Near the end of his book Mr. Dahmus says (p. 156), "It is extremely improbable that Wyclyf ever enjoyed anything approaching the political stature which would have warranted his addressing either Parliament or the great council." Quite apart from the question as to whether Wyclyf ever did so address Parliament or the great council, or ever wanted to, or even whether that would have been a measure of "political stature," this whole study quite adequately proves that Wyclyf's person and ideas seemed about the most important, the most obstinate and objectionable factor in English life to two archbishops of Canterbury. Wyclyf might have been quite content to be measured by that gauge.

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*Essays in Divinity*. By JOHN DONNE. Edited by EVELYN M. SIMPSON. Oxford University Press, 1952. xxix, 137 pp. $4.00.

*The Sermons of John Donne*. Edited with introductions and critical apparatus by GEORGE R. POTTER and EVELYN M. SIMPSON. Vol. I. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1953. (To be published in ten volumes at the rate of two a year.) xiv, 354 pp. $7.50.

A legend has grown up that Donne fell into total neglect during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to be rediscovered only during the twentieth. Donne, however, never completely lacked readers at any time. Pope "translated" some of the satires into "regular" verse, a dubious form of admiration, but admiration nevertheless. Dr. Johnson may have criticized Donne adversely, but he did not feel that he could ignore him, while Coleridge, Browning, and Rossetti not only appreciated Donne but studied him.

Past interest in Donne looks like neglect only if we compare it to the astounding growth of interest in him which the twentieth century has witnessed. We have paid him enough attention to compensate for any previous neglect, real or imaginary. His poetic work received the scholarly labors of Sir Herbert Grierson, who in 1912 published the great two-volume edition of the collected poems which, more than any other single event, initiated the modern revival of interest in Donne. Many of the leading poets of our age, among them T. S. Eliot, schooled themselves on Donne's poetry, and it has been subjected for many years to the infinitely subtle stylistic and semantic analyses of the new critics.

A whole generation of poets and critics found in Donne's restless intellectual curiosity, his guilt, his skeptical temper, and his morbid preoccupation with death, a reflection of their own malaise. Part of their interest in Donne undoubtedly lay in a sense of spiritual kinship with him and his time. But a great part of their interest was aesthetic. His learned and technical imagery, his prosaic language, his startling metaphors, seemed to offer models to the poets who were looking for a substitute for the outworn diction of their Victorian and Romantic predecessors. The critics, appreciating the same qualities in Donne's verse, urged the poets to turn to him for their education in the craft.

We have now passed the peak of critical interest in Donne the poet, but interest in Donne the churchman and theologian would seem to be growing. Some, if not most, of this interest in his theological writings

is attributable to a momentum derived from the enthusiasm for his poetry. The first of the works under review, the *Essays in Divinity,* would probably never have seen a modern edition after that of Augustus Jessopp in 1855 if Donne had not been enthusiastically "rediscovered" in our own times. Jessopp's edition was the only one after the first in 1651, published by Donne's son some thirty to thirty-five years after the work was written. *Essays* was omitted from Alford's *Works of Donne* (1839), presumably because the editor did not know of its existence.

Donne wrote the *Essays,* as his son tells us in his preface to the first edition, "when he had many debates betwixt God and himself, whether he were worthy, and competently learned to enter into Holy Orders," and as a document illuminating this important period in his life it merits the attention of any serious student of Donne, even if, as a work of literature or theology, it might be ignored with equanimity. It is the most "latitudinarian" of his theological works, and would seem to reflect a period when, having found a spiritual haven in the Anglican Church, he had also achieved a satisfactory relationship to his past, which had been successively Roman Catholic and skeptical.

The work is in the form of a series of short essays on the first two books of the Bible "interwoven with meditations and prayers"—the best writing in the book—most of which come at the end of each of the two main divisions. It is, for the most part, however, a scholastic exercise in which Donne parades an extraordinary amount of apparently heterogeneous learning: references to scriptures and the great biblical commentators of his time, to classical authors, the fathers, scientists, occultists of various kinds, all are blended together without any apparent regard for the intellectual compatibility of his authorities. If, as Dr. Johnson maintained, in his poems Donne yoked dissimilar ideas together by violence, he might be said to do the same thing with "authorities" in his prose writings.

His interest in Pico della Mirandola—constant, but not uncritical—might give us a clue to Donne's practice in this matter. He shared, it would seem, Pico's sense of the unity of truth and his belief in a kind of natural religion, but not with the same conviction or extravagance. For Donne, various conflicting schools of thought all contributed to Christian truth, and the minds of the wise of all times and places may have been *naturaliter christianae,* but more than a century had elapsed

since Pico, and European civilization and culture had moved further towards multiplicity than towards unity. Yet, in an age of bitter sectarian controversy, Donne was able to hold fast to the ideal unity of all Christians: "So Synagogue and Church, *Roman* and *Reformed,* and all other distinctions of place, Discipline, or Person, but one Church, journying to one *Hierusalem,* and directed by one guide, Christ Jesus."

Mrs. Evelyn M. Simpson, one of the leading Donne scholars, has carefully edited this text and provided it with an interesting introduction. She points out some of the numerous parallels in thought and imagery to other works of Donne, and gives a convincing evaluation of the importance of the work in the Donne canon. The book has a very useful section on his sources and a splendid set of notes, in which his obscure authorities are identified and the difficulties of the text are explained. This edition is an excellent example of the thorough and careful scholarship students of Donne have come to expect from Mrs. Simpson.

The appearance of the first of ten volumes of the complete sermons of John Donne is the most important event in Donne scholarship since Grierson's edition of the poems, for it is primarily on these works that we must base our estimate of him as a prose writer and as a theologian. Professor George R. Potter and Mrs. Evelyn M. Simpson have undertaken an arduous task, and the first installment of their work is a brilliant success. When, five years from now, all of the remaining volumes have been published, we shall possess the kind of edition all scholars desire for their favorite authors, but which few find available.

Over half of this first volume is composed of bibliographical textual and critical introductions to the whole series, and the various introductions taken together constitute an extraordinarily compact summary of all the available information about Donne's sermons. Much of this material will be of interest to the student of Donne, even if he is not primarily interested in his prose, and this volume should therefore find a wider audience than any other single volume which will follow. The volume contains the first nine of the sermons. Since they are the earliest of his ventures in this field, they are chiefly of interest to Donne scholars, although here and there we find the power which, fully revealed in later works, made him the most admired pulpit orator of his time.

A new edition of the sermons is, even to seventeenth-century scholars, a rather surprising event. The most obvious reason for this conviction is that sermons no longer constitute a significant part of the fare of the

general reading public. Few people other than clergymen read modern sermons, and only scholars read old ones. Furthermore, Donne is the most voluminous of the old sixteenth and seventeenth-century divines, exceeding all the others of his era, such as Hooker and Taylor, in sheer quantity of his writings. He is also, from a theological and philosophical point of view, rather uninteresting. We look in vain for some brilliant idea or theological insight in the mass of interminable divisions of texts, labored ingenuity, scholastic disputes, and forgotten controversies. Extraordinarily learned, Donne never seems to rise above or proceed beyond his authorities to any fresh intellectual perception.

We find it difficult to believe that people jammed St. Paul's to listen with rapt attention for hours to these creations, yet we know that they did and that there was a great demand for the printed texts as well, indicating that it was not mere oratorical virtuosity which held the audience captive. Indeed, Donne was more than the great speaker and pulpit personality he was reported to be. Imbedded in his sermons is some of the greatest English prose ever written, and it is when Donne the poet overcomes Donne the theologian that we realize the secret of his power and feel, with Logan Pearsall Smith, that "these old divines were great men and great writers" and understand why "their voices enthralled the best and wisest of their own generation." With consummate artistry he explores the heights and depths the religious consciousness reaches when it confronts the mysteries of human existence. Despair and hope, fear and joy, guilt and redemption, the whole spectrum of religious experience is not simply described or analyzed, but intensely imagined and furnished with some of the most gorgeous orchestration in the language. I said that Donne explores the whole range of religious experience. This is not quite true. One great experience is lacking—peace. This lack—if it may properly be called a lack—is significant in view of the fact that so much of the literature on Donne refers to him as a mystic. Of course this term is inherently vague and rather difficult to handle, but I think the sense in which Donne is incorrectly called a mystic will become clearer if I say that nowhere, to my knowledge, does he draw upon an experience or idea which was not within the grasp of any educated conventionally devout believer of his own time. He never displays any calm transcendence over the world and its strife. In fact, Donne is in some ways the reverse of the mystic. He is too much interested in the multiplicity of events to wish to transcend them. His world

is a world of variety which fascinates his mind by that very diversity which the mystic learns to ignore and transcend. His fear of death is, after all, a fear of that very world which the mystic seeks.

Of course Donne knew and used mystical phraseology in both his poems and his sermons, but the appearance therein of the imagery of medieval and renaissance mysticism does not constitute evidence that he was a mystic. He was immensely erudite and, as a conscious and true artist, all his erudition was at the service of his art. If there is a sense in which we can call Donne a mystic, it is only in that extreme of loose usage with which the term is applied to writers as different as Wordsworth, Blake, and Yeats; and we could with as much right call him a scholastic, an astronomer, and an alchemist, for he employs all these branches of learning in formulating his emotions.

Donne's restlessness, his sense of guilt and fear of death belie the imputation of mysticism. His conversion was based neither on intellectual assent nor on some immediate preternatural experience, but was a turning to faith by a man whose intellect had been thoroughly chastened, and who was exhausted by a fruitless intellectual hunt. No mystic fresh from an ecstatic union with the Absolute would pen lines like:

> Batter my heart, three person'd God, for you
> As yet but knocke, breathe, shine, and seeke to mend,
> That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow mee, 'and bend
> Your force, to breake, blow, burn and make me new.
> I, like an usurpt towne, to 'another due
> Labor to 'admit you, but Oh, to no end, . . .[1]

or feel the kind of guilt he expresses in "A Hymn to God the Father."

> Wilt thou forgive that sinne where I begunne,
> Which is my sin, though it were done before?
> Wilt thou forgive, those sinnes, through which I runne,
> And do run still: though still I do deplore?
> When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
> For I have more.

Donne touches the heights of religious devotion in some of his sermons, but his God always remained starkly transcendent, and he was tormented by guilt until the last. His way in religion was fideistic and, in the manner characteristic of exhausted intellectuals, his gain in faith

1. "Holy Sonnets XIV."

was accompanied by a loss of trust in the intellect. "An hydroptique and immoderate desire for humane learning" led him to the study of the major intellectual systems of his time. He eventually rejected them all qua systems, but he did press many ideas from them to the service of his art and made use of incomplete, disjointed fragments of philosophical systems as vehicles for his emotions.

Ideas from alchemy, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, and theology appear and reappear throughout the body of his work, and often in such curious juxtaposition as to seem to justify the strictures of those critics who have accused him of a lack of intellectual responsibility. But Donne as a true poet has an aesthetic rather than an intellectual interest in ideas. He used ideas without much regard for what we would call their truth value but for whatever value they may have had for evoking emotions, expressing attitudes and states of mind, and illustrating the moral truths revealed to faith.

Donne the preacher was, in fact, working in the tradition of the baroque or "metaphysical" sermon. Such sermons were built upon a system of "preachable conceits" which correspond closely to the extensively elaborated metaphors characteristic of "metaphysical" poetry. The "preachable conceit" was a pedagogical device whereby the truths of faith were inculcated by showing how the particular truth was contained symbolically or analogically in a fact, a word or phrase of scripture, an historical event, or in a phenomenon of nature. The points of departure did not matter nor their relationship to each other. What did matter was that the preacher, by the exercise of all of his learning and ingenuity, showed how all or any of seemingly heterogeneous loci converged on the same moral truth. One author had written two books, the Bible and the book of nature and human experience. Both books, in effect, had been written in "preachable conceits," and it was the duty of the preacher gracefully to unfold and reveal in their fulness the preachable conceits which God had lightly hinted.[2] Donne's method of writing sermons was therefore not truly "logical" but analogical, and that in the highest degree. We are far more aware of the limitations of

2. *Il Cannochiale Aristotelico,* by Emmanuele Tesauro (Venice, 1654) contains a characteristic seventeenth-century treatise on the preachable conceit. Benedetto Croce wrote an interesting essay on the baroque sermon, "I predicatori italiani del seicento e il gusto spagnuolo," in *Saggi sulla letteratura italiana del seicento* (Bari, 1924). The essay is fully annotated with bibliographical notes.

analogical reasoning today, and it is not surprising that some of his displays of wit and ingenuity might strike us as false and sterile.

Donne may not have been a mystic, saint, or great theologian, but he was a true Christian and a great artist. The social, political, religious, and intellectual changes of his time seemed to him to have brought nothing but disorder and disunity to his age. The personal experience of religion seemed the only way out of the confusion of conflicting philosophies and opinions.

> Be not concerned: studie not why, not when;
> Doe not so much as not beleeve a man.
> For though to erre, be worst, to try truths forth
> Is far more business, than this world is worth.[3]

He turned to faith, and it was a faith profoundly felt and profoundly imagined. While he did not storm heaven or the citadel of thought, he gave artistic form to a wide range of universal and recurrent human experience.

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*The Swedenborg Epic.* By Cyriel O. Sigstedt. New York: Bookman Associates, 1952. xvii, 517 pp. $4.50.

When, only a few years after the work by Signe Toksvig, a new comprehensive biography of Swedenborg from an American pen appears, it is a sign that the Swedish naturalist and seer concerns the spiritual life of the present day in a striking manner. Apparently it is the peculiar combination of extensive scientific and philosophical thinking with a visionary gift which makes his figure so attractive. The present work by Cyriel O. Sigstedt differs from the other versions of the last decade in method in that it is a biography in the strict sense of the word, and, as regards its contents, it is an interpretation of Swedenborg from the standpoint of a member of the New Church, which regards itself as the fulfillment of his promised form of the true church.

The pure biographical design has the advantage of a comprehensive presentation of the entire Swedenborg tradition. Everything which R. L. Tafel assembled in his two volumes of documents concerning the

3. "The Second Anniversarie" ll. 51-54.

life and character of Swedenborg, and all the documents and testimonies which, in the meantime, the research work of the Academy at Bryn Athyn has collected in addition, are here brought together in an orderly historical sequence. In greater fullness one comes to know the most important events of his outer and inner life—the sequence of his works, his travels, and his encounters. Even the numerous anecdotes about Swedenborg from the lips of his friends and enemies are historically arranged; the proofs of his visionary gifts, for example, on the occasion of the fire at Stockholm, etc., are assigned their place in the course of his life's events. The enumeration of his works is accomplished with industry and care, not only by means of a brief informatory resumé, but also with an account of the echoes found in contemporary reviews. In this respect the book represents a notable scientific achievement, in that the complete manysidedness of the figure and work of Swedenborg is plainly revealed, as on a motion picture reel, so to speak. And, as an introduction to a wider circle of readers, it is the more suitable in that it is presented in a pleasing, lively style.

But exactly in this method there lies a limitation of viewpoint. The historical character of Swedenborg, in its uniqueness and singularity, is lifted entirely out of the context of history, and herein the dogmatic New Church interpretation is apparent. Exactly that which is problematical for the reader of today is set forth as self-evident, i.e., that Swedenborg is the only man who, by reason of a special grace, from a definite point of time in his life kept an open view into the spiritual world and reported its secrets as an authentic witness, on the basis of seeing and hearing, and, on the basis of this personal observation revealed the true sense of the Word of God. Thus, in respect to his importance as a scientist as well as a seer, an uncritical apologetic viewpoint asserts itself. This is already noticeable in the placement of Swedenborg in the history of science in his time. The traditional verdict of modern scientists is cited to establish the fact that, both in his scientific and philosophical work, he was far in advance of his century, e.g., that he anticipated Freud in psychology, Kant and Laplace in cosmology, and some of the discoveries of modern brain anatomists. But judgments such as these do not suffice so long as there is no certainty that those who render these opinions also possess a knowledge of the state of science in his day sufficient to be able to judge his work correctly in critical comparison with that of his contemporaries. Certainly Swedenborg did intuitively

outrun the science of his day on certain points, but one would be glad to know exactly on which points this is the case. Here, it seems to me, many more critical source studies and particular proofs are needed before his work is finally appraised.

It is even more striking that the events of his spiritual crisis which ended with the appearance of his visionary gifts, as well as the description of his visionary experience itself, are stated only as Swedenborg himself interpreted them. Moreover, there is a conspicuously apologetic tendency in the choice of material presented, in that everything is omitted which might throw even a shadow over the spotless image of the founder of the New Church. While Swedenborg the scientist, in a summary way at least, is placed in the scientific history of his day, for Swedenborg the seer, this is left completely undone. The impression is created that, as regards his visionary experience, his theological ideas, and his religious type, there is no historical analogy to whom he can be compared. So just the question which the modern reader directs toward such a figure remains unformulated and naturally unanswered, namely, how does it stand with the claim to truth of his revelation? What is his place in the history of Christian visionaries who have come forward at various times with revelations and claims similar to his? The dogmatic interpretation goes so far that the moral evaluation in the judgment of his friends and enemies is accepted simply at face value, and in such a manner as to make his enemies appear as notorious moral blockheads, whereas precisely the critical judgment of his contemporaries in both the scientific and ecclesiastical camps would be needed to judge what is new and unique in the claim to truth of Swedenborg's doctrine.

That which Martin Lamm has overdone in his attempt to represent the teaching of Swedenborg as only a new form of Neo-Platonism and to define him according to a pre-existent model of a philosophical thought-form, is, by Sigstedt, too little done. She has lifted him, as theologian and seer, entirely out of history and put him on a pedestal, as if truly, after a thousand years of spiritual degeneration, the whole truth, in the form of a unique revelation from heaven, had fallen upon him, and as if any comparison to earlier forms of vision and knowledge of truth, or even the presentation of an historical analogy, were a crime of lèse-majesté.

Certainly it must be admitted that the premises for a critical consideration of Swedenborg as seer are still very incomplete. There is as yet

no history of Christian vision in which the representative figures and visionary experiences are assembled and investigated. Psychology has only very imperfectly tackled the problem of visionary knowledge, and the usual assignment of such phenomena to psychopathology, in accord with the motto, "What cannot be ruled out must be seen as a neurosis," has not conduced to the furthering of their investigation. Future Swedenborg research will bring a genuine enrichment to scientific knowledge only when it overcomes the dogmatic isolation of Swedenborg and places him in the living history of scientific knowledge, religious experience, and theological ideas, and from there poses the question at what points his own claims are legitimate and mediate a deeper scientifically responsible insight and knowledge of the truth.

ERNST BENZ

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*A History of Unitarianism, in Transylvania, England and America.* By EARL MORSE WILBUR. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952. 518 pp. $7.50.

A second or complementary volume to the author's earlier work, *A History of Unitarianism: Socinianism and Its Antecedents* (Cambridge, 1945). Thus Dr. Wilbur completes the results of fifty years of prodigious research in a little explored field, requiring the mastery of nine languages. There are a number of reasons why a twentieth century historian should find himself a pioneer in a movement of thought which began in the early part of the sixteenth century in the north of Italy and wandered over the European continent as an expelleé, finding its only permanent organized form in the countries dealt with in this second volume. The first reason is that this child of the Renaissance which became a reformation of the Reformation was too great a departure from the settled forms of thought in which Christianity had become fixed, and the church historian therefore paid little heed to such a heresy. A second is that much of the early life of Unitarianism, its intellectual insights and controversies, was driven over into eastern European countries of strange tongues and off the main stream of our Latin, Anglo-Saxon, Western culture.

In spite of its title suggesting interest for a particular denomination only, this history should have wide and general appeal for all who are devotees of freedom, reason, and tolerance, particularly in our time of

pressures. In its pages are recorded the struggles, persecutions and martyrdoms where freedom and tolerance in religion were really won. Unorthodox opinions posed the problem, heretics paid the penalty, with the result that the earliest legislation in Christian history on behalf of religious freedom and toleration was enacted in the lovely but remote principality of Transylvania. The bold and romantic Francis David, first bishop and virtual founder of the Unitarian churches of Transylvania, made his appeal for religious toleration and equal rights for all churches at the National Diet of Torda in 1568, only fifteen years after Castellio in Switzerland had combatted Calvin's dictatorship on behalf of the same principles.

The first third of Dr. Wilbur's volume is devoted to the interesting story of the settlement and early history of Transylvania, the Reformation beginning in 1520, the rise of Unitarianism and the martyrdom of David, the checkered history of the church, alternating between patronage and persecution under the changing dynasties, down through the no less turbulent present half century, with the transfer of sovereignty from Hungary to Rumania, and the coming of Communism. It is a fascinating, often painful, yet heroic story. In 1927 I myself had the privilege of seeing these, and the churches of the other three established denominations, in the picturesque cities or nestled away in the hill villages, and it was plain that only the persistent loyalty of the Szeklers has kept them alive to the present day. It is a strange fact that not until well into the nineeenth century did the Unitarians of England and America learn that they had these brethren of the spirit who had been contending for the same principles and faith through a long and noble history.

Persecution is always the most effective form of propaganda, both because it focuses attention on the heretical ideas of the persecuted and because those who escape spread their ideas wherever they go. The Socinianism driven out of Poland, described in volume I, found its way across the British Channel from Holland and influenced a movement of thought begun in England some ninety years previously which had already numbered its martyrs. In 1401 the act condemning heretics to death at the stake was passed and not abolished until 1677. The story of the beginnings of English Unitarianism, as told by Dr. Wilbur, is therefore one of high conscientiousness and courage in the face of brutality. It is a part of the story of the great price paid for liberties

which makes the English of today so zealous to preserve their freedoms in the face of threatening danger. The outstanding name to emerge in the seventeenth century was that of John Biddle, born in 1615. His study of the Scriptures resulted in much the same conclusions concerning the doctrine of the Trinity as did that of Socinus or Servetus. His effort was for a reformed scriptural Christianity. Much of his adult life was spent in prison, and he finally died there in 1662. It is he who is known as the Father of English Unitarianism. Notable successors carried on his views in controversy with the Established Church to the end of the century. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the Church of England itself was permeated with Arian views, and had these won out, as they seemed likely to do at one moment, the history of Unitarianism as a separate movement would have ended. The story of the struggle against compulsory subscription throughout the century and the final secession of the Unitarians from the Church of England is fully and carefully related. Theophilus Lindsey, born in 1723, becomes symbol, and the Essex Street Church, which he founded in 1774, still exists in London, though in a new location. Liberal Dissenters, following Joseph Priestley, add their strength to the movement, and the English Unitarian Church, which has since had so many illustrious names on its roll, battles opposition and matures.

The history of Unitarianism in America is condensed by Dr. Wilbur into a hundred pages, doubtless because it is near at hand and generally known. The chapters on "Religious Tendencies in Colonial New England" and "The Period of Controversy: 1800-1825," are particularly well done. Because the trinitarian-unitarian controversy loomed so large in New England, every American with a New England background has some smattering of information concerning it. These chapters will illuminate such knowledge and will also serve to induct any American into the struggles whereby freedom, both in religion and politics, was wrought out at the beginning of our life as a nation. That freedom of thought in a church has meant development of thought, so that the Unitarianism of today, while based upon the same principles, is nevertheless not the Unitarianism of the early nineteenth century, is evident in the last two chapters. This reviewer wishes, however, that a fuller treatment of significant and newer conceptions within the free church in America might have been given or will be given by other scholars.

Freedom, reason, and tolerance, as the conditions for the true ends of religion in the elevation of personal character and the improvement of the social order, have been bought at the price of more martyrs, in proportion to the numbers who have contended for them, than any other effort in the Christian tradition. The best testimony I have had concerning this book is that of a business man who spent the night reading its 490 closely printed pages and did not stop until he had finished them.

JOHN HOWLAND LATHROP

First Unitarian Church
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*The Philosophy of William Ellery Channing.* By ROBERT LEET PATTERSON. New York: Bookman Associates, 1952. vii, 298 pp. $4.50.

This is a fascinating book about one of the most brilliant of American preachers and theologians, who was also a philosopher. As an eloquent pulpiteer, he reigned over a great age of Boston life with his burning discussions of slavery and war and poverty, as well as personal religion. But he discoursed also upon sensation, causation, substance, space, time, matter, mind, and other problems of epistomology and cosmogony. Channing is found to be much more significant as a philosophic thinker than has been supposed, and this chiefly by his conception of sameness, a sameness of essence in the being of God and man.

After tracing Channing's background and divergence with respect to Calvin on one hand and Locke on the other, Professor Patterson shows how Channing used this principle of essential sameness in every aspect of his theology. We can achieve a valid knowledge of God not only from the external world but because "his greatness is the infinity of attributes which you yourselves possess." It is this factor which adds to the Thomist and Scotist proof *that* God is, a true knowledge of *what* he is. It is by this approach, rational but touched by the mystical, that Channing reaches his guiding ideas of the unipersonality and moral perfection of God.

Such a conception involves the divinity of man in a sense far beyond that of orthodoxy. Godlike man is a free agent and not divided. Despite the malignity of sinful impulses, "Our nature is whole, a beautiful whole, and no part can be spared." The author well exposes Channing's

many ideas about the rights and duties of such a man in relation to society and government. By the same token, Christ is regarded as a being who differs in calling but not in nature from other men. "The mind of Jesus Christ . . . and your mind are of one family, nor is there anything in him of which you have not the principle, the capacity and the promise in yourself."

In like manner, the principle of essential sameness confirms man's rational nature as the medium, judge, and vindication of revelation, and promises an unending development of man's knowledge of God. Revelation thus merges with salvation. By our moral nature may we know a moral God, and by the duties of virtue are we saved to the joys of virtue, now and ever. More and more, any man may become one with Christ and God. "I am persuaded that there is not a glory, a virtue, a power, a joy, possessed by Jesus Christ, to which his disciples will not successively rise."

Much of Channing's philosophy is singularly pertinent to our own day. Did he teach not only the unity of God but also the unity of all reality? Dr. Patterson more than once indicates a hesitation of Channing between dualism and idealism, and calls it regrettable. Should we not rather call it admirable that he refuses them both? For these are not the only alternatives, and Channing was already moving towards a deeper unity. He speaks of the "unity of God and the universe." "Perhaps as knowledge advances, we shall discover that the Creator is bound to his works by stronger and more intimate ties than we now imagine." "The worlds of matter and mind are too intimately connected to admit of exact partition." These and other words are pointers towards the personalistic pantheism or panentheism of Charles Hartshorne. In any case, Channing's deep unitary philosophy is a devastating repudiation of the dual reality and dual man held by much of current theology.

No less important is Channing's liberalism as founded upon religious values more deeply than those that are merely intellectual. One of his moving discourses, "Most Favorable to Piety," sweeps along like a tidal wave, with its nine points at which the doctrine of the unity of God is not only intellectually but religiously superior to the dogma of the Trinity. So, also, is his conception of identical destinies for Christ and the Christlike. For him, Christ is not in essence separated from other men, but the model of what any man may become. This view almost anticipates the great work by Frank Chamberlain Porter, *The Mind of*

*Christ in Paul,* liberal for religious more than for critical reasons. At one major point, his acceptance of miracle, Channing failed to apply this method. The aversion of the modern mind to miracles is not only scientific and rational but religious. They would not only break an order of nature which is the everyday dependence of farmer and chemist, but constitute cases of special privilege unacceptable to a moralized religion.

Pertinent also to these times and the religion of all times, is Channing's unbounded hope. He poured scorn upon the Calvinist limitation of revelation to the past. Such a view is not sufficiently religious for the liberal. Channing would put no bounds to the illuminations of the Holy Spirit.

Much of theology has gone beyond Channing, but most of it has not yet caught up with him, either in intellectual breadth or in religious depth. Of his teaching about the knowledge of God, the author says: "So far as I know, nothing comparable to it has ever before appeared in the history of Christian thought." This judgment rests firmly upon the principle of essential sameness, justifiably used as the key to open the doors of the spacious rooms in the house of Channing's religion. We should, however, be the more ready to accept it had the author definitely related it to similar though more subtle statements of the same principle in recent philosophic writing. In one other matter Dr. Patterson is unnecessarily troubled, the dilemma he finds as between Channing's demand for perfection and his assertion of unending progress. The universe of process resolves the dilemma.

Professor Patterson has brought forth a fresh and convincing picture of one of the most original and challenging thinkers American religion has produced. It should lead many readers to open the thrilling pages of Channing himself. He is good medicine for the mind and heart of today.

V. Ogden Vogt

Vero Beach, Florida

*The Christian Dilemma: Catholic Church—Reformation.* By W. H. Van de Pol. Translated by Dr. G. Van Hall. New York: Philosophical Library, 1952. xviii, 299 pp. $4.75.

This book is the most important contribution to the Ecumenical Movement from the Roman-Catholic side thus far published in

America. It is important to note, however, that it is not written by an American, but by a Dutchman, and in a country where Catholics show a much greater interest in the movement than they do here. The author is well qualified to speak for both sides, for he himself has dedicated his entire life to the Ecumenical Movement, first as a Reformed, then an Anglican, and finally as a Catholic theologian. At present he holds the unique position of Professor of the Phenomenology of Protestantism at the Catholic University of Nijmegen. Dr. Van de Pol presents here a quite different approach from that of other Catholic authors on ecumenics, e.g., the Germans, Adam, Laros, Lortz, and Pribilla, the French theologians, Congar, Danielou, and Villain, and Bathasar, in Switzerland. Instead of a theological controversy or historical analysis, he offers an impartial and profound insight into the religious life and psychology of both Protestants and Catholics.

The provocative title emphasizes the thesis of the book, namely, that Christendom is faced with the dilemma of an inescapable choice between the Catholic Church and the Reformation. This subtitle, however, makes one wonder whether the translation is correct, for it seems poor style, if not an illogical antithesis, to oppose the name of a Church to the term of an historical period. What is meant is clear from the content: Catholic Church versus Reformed Church; Spirit of Catholicism versus Spirit of the Reformation. Dr. Van de Pol makes a sharp distinction between the terms "Reformed" and "Protestant," because he does not consider all elements of Protestantism as based on the original principles of the Reformation, with which he is primarily concerned. Since he believes that the Reformation is the only true alternative to Catholicism, he does not deal with the modern trends of Protestant Neo-orthodoxy and Liberalism, nor with Sectarianism, which are merely crises within Protestantism itself. Likewise he rules out of discussion Eastern Orthodoxy and Old Catholicism as merely a matter of schism and not of doctrinal opposition. He dedicates, however, a long chapter to Anglicanism as "a microcosm of the whole of Christendom," "the embodiment of the ecumenical dilemma." Anglicanism has never been content with the antithesis of Catholicism and Protestantism and has tried to hold on to both, not because of indifference and lack of principle, but because of its very nature of comprehensiveness. Yet, by characterizing Anglicanism as "the manifestation of the English people

on its religious side," he does not do justice to the phenomenon of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America.

Dr. Van de Pol reduces all dogmatical divergencies between the Catholic and the Church of the Reformation to one "cardinal difference" (which however is not a "radical" one), namely, that Divine revelation is for the Catholic a revelation of a new reality which has penetrated our present world and time. For the Reformed Christian, however, it is a revelation of God's word, of a promise to be fulfilled only in a future life. He is still living "between the times," by faith, not by participation. For both the ground of faith is the word of God, but for one it is the word as revealed in the Scriptures only, for the other it is the word as taught by the Church, which is itself a part of the revealed reality. Both agree that faith is a grace, but, for the Protestant, the emphasis rests on the performance of the act of faith, and, for the Catholic, on the content of what is believed; the former seeks more the essential, the *unum necessarium,* of the Gospel; the latter, more the entirety of its content. Consequently it might appear that a different Gospel is preached in Protestant and Catholic churces. The Protestant preaches the possibility of salvation to the unbeliever, while the Catholic preaches to the believer the practical realization of it.

In a very interesting chapter on the psychological obstacles, Father Van de Pol shows how, from this cardinal difference between "word-revelation" and "reality-revelation," two different spiritual attitudes derive, which have far-reaching consequences for the evaluation of the natural life (e.g., marriage) as well as the sacramental life (e.g., the manner of praying). Protestant spirituality is based on "word and spirit"; whereas Catholic spirituality is founded on "grace and sacrament." But these are only different shifts of emphasis, and each part could enrich its own spiritual life by absorbing some elements from the other. He therefore warns his fellow Catholics to give up their scholastic manner of expression in talking to non-Catholics and assume a more scriptural mode of thinking.

This difference in religious spirituality is the cause of great psychological obstacles and often of a complete lack of contact between Catholics and Protestants.

We are all burdened with an inheritance from the past. Together we are guilty, together we must be converted and be reconciled with each other. . . . To make any progress towards unity we shall have to lay down our arms and

with mutual trust listen seriously to what each side must say in the cause of truth. . . . The time has arrived when we must set about earnestly in a common endeavour to find the solution of these problems, not counting where it may lead us, but being content to leave all to God's guidance and grace.

The final chapter is dedicated to the crucial question of the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Movement. The author believes that Christendom has entered upon a new phase with the formation of the World Council of Churches. He points out the five genuine discoveries of the Ecumenical Movement which led to the recognition that a purely social-ethical co-operation among Christians is, in the long run, impossible so long as essential dogmatic differences exist, and that the nature of the Church demands visible unity, although this unity can never be achieved at the expense of truth. Dr. Van de Pol does not conceal his misgivings about the rigid tone of the encyclical letter *Mortalium animos* of 1928, which merely gave a picture of the Ecumenical Movement in its early stages and did not express one word of appreciation for its first attempts which, in his opinion, it deserved. He agrees, however, that an official participation of the Catholic Church in the World Council of Churches would be premature, and that it would deprive the Council of all freedom of action. The Council would collapse under the weight of authority which the Catholic Church, by virtue of her number, would necessarily bring to bear upon it. Yet, he recommends the unofficial participation of some expert "observers," who, without entering the discussions, could give firsthand information to the advantage of both sides. (This has been approved finally by Rome.) At the Third Conference on Faith and Order last August in Lund, several Catholic observers were actually present. It may be that this is a first result of the ecumenical work accomplished by Roman Catholic theologians like Father Van de Pol.

Eva Maria Jung

New York City

*Religion in 20th Century America.* By Herbert W. Schneider. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952. x, 244 pp. $4.25.

Professor Schneider gives a comprehensive survey of the many happenings in the field of American religion since 1900, combined with sympathetic understanding of these diverse developments. Most re-

markable is his objectivity. I have not elsewhere found so much freedom from partisan bias joined with so much warm appreciation of what these religious groups are trying to do.

In this book one seems to see from a high perspective the whole movement of religious life in America since 1900 written by one who has been a part of it all. As a boy he lived in the midst of a religious community at the beginning of the century. He has since attained a vantage point in Columbia University teaching philosophy and religion from which he has been able to trace the windings and intertwinings of religious thought and practice during these fifty years.

The Library of Congress is sponsoring now at mid-century a series of books edited by Ralph Henry Gabriel, of Yale, in which the several segments of American civilization are surveyed as they have developed during the half century. Art in America and News in America have thus far been covered, and this is the third volume giving us the picture of Religion in America.

Professor Schneider does little generalizing but devotes himself almost entirely to a record of the events that have occurred. The events are selected in such a way as to enable the reader to observe the transformations that have taken place in religion when it is seen as one part of a civilization undergoing revolution. We are in the midst of the revolution and so deeply immersed in it that we cannot see where it is going nor what will come out of it, so Mr. Schneider does not venture to predict. He lets the happenings as set forth in the record speak for themselves so far as they have anything to reveal. He does not point out the graph which is being described by these events as they occur in religious institutions, in religious interpretation of morals, in theology and religious philosophy, in worship and religious art, and in the changing views of the nature and meaning of religious experience. But he devotes a chapter to the changes that have occurred in each of these five developments: institutional, moral, philosophical, worshipful-artistic, and empirical.

While the author does not himself say much about the directions of change being marked out by these various kinds of religious happenings, the lines are plainly there, and this picture of religious transformation is most interesting. This direction of change is perhaps the most informing fact to be discovered by any historical survey such as this, and it is all the more telling when the author lets it rise up out of the

record instead of stating it himself. I shall try briefly to indicate what this transformation has been during the first half of the twentieth century as it appears from a study of the history presented by Professor Schneider.

The religion of America during these fifty years is divided into two movements, the first occurring in the first quarter of the century, the second during the second quarter. The first was a swing toward merging religion with the total culture of our age and country, driven by the effort to assume religious responsibility for our society and our destiny in history. The second was a swing back in the effort to conserve what is distinctive and holy in religion as over against the secular life in which we are immersed. It is as though religious leaders awoke after the end of the first quarter century to the danger that religion might be lost, engulfed in politics, industry, education, social reform, science, neighborhood and family, with nothing distinctive and nothing on which to stand to resist the total drift of human life toward disaster.

During the first quarter of the century, religious leaders strove to bring religion "up to date" and to harness it along with other forces working to pull human life to higher levels. Then, as the second quarter got under way, these leaders suddenly were aghast to find that they were no longer sure that they had anything to offer that could not be gained from other sources. So now these shapers of the religious life are engaged in the struggle to find what it is that religion can do for man that nothing else can.

More specifically, the question now being asked and variously answered as a consequence of the last fifty years of religious life in America is something like this: How can Christianity assume full responsibility for the life of man in all its ramifications and depths of good and evil, and still stand firm on ground that does not change nor move with any of these changing currents, whether they move toward human welfare or human horror. This question and this problem are the center of concern for American Christianity at the present moment.

Of course all the developments in the religious life of America cannot be put neatly into the capsule that I have just prepared for them. One good thing about this book is that the author does not try to put the religious history of the past half century into a capsule. He presents it in all its sprawling diversity. The fundamentalists fought the modernists, who were unintentionally obliterating the line that distin-

guishes religion from what is not religion in human life. Today some powerful and growing religious sects repudiate any responsibility for the changes occurring in society and strive above all to stand aloof from them. Perhaps the greatest number of Americans affiliated with churches drift along in their religious practices without being aware of any problems at all pertaining to religion or society or history. All this appears very plainly in the account given by Professor Schneider. But over and above the stupor and the complacency, the drifting and the inertia, are the changes that indicate the problems and the struggles of those who are trying to do something about human life by way of religion, and doing it with some awareness of what is happening. These can, I think, with a good deal of spilling over, be put into my capsule.

All interested in the religion of our time should read this book.

HENRY N. WIEMAN

University of Chicago

*The Existentialist Revolt.* By KURT F. REINHARDT. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1952. 243 pp. $3.50.

This book certainly ranks with the very best work done on existentialism. Six of the outstanding figures in the field are presented in a clear, readable style. Of course these thinkers, especially Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, but also Heidegger, Sartre, Jaspers, and Marcel, suffer even more than most philosophers when they are summarized. Each has an individuated style that is vital to the meaning of his work. However, within the limits of methodical, relatively brief exposition, Dr. Reinhardt does an excellent job in capturing the flavor of these thinkers, and uses his many quotations from their works effectively. In addition, he achieves a sense of continuity throughout the book by skilfully developing the main themes of existentialism as they appear in each thinker so that one sheds light upon the other. The concluding chapter contains a useful sketch of the key themes of existential philosophy.

His introductory chapter, "The Crisis of Human Existence," is also very useful, because it avoids the bombastic overstatements that characterize so much of the material on the crisis of man. It sets the existentialist movement within the main currents of Western thought and provides a needed historical perspective on its development.

The balanced historical perspective which Dr. Reinhardt brings to

this study of existentialism derives from his Thomistic outlook. While this outlook is used to good purposes in the introduction, his use of it as a tool for criticizing the various existentialists is generally exasperating. This is not a fault of his Thomism, but rather, it derives from the lack of space for developing his critical arguments, and so, with the exception of a more detailed criticism of Sartre's philosophy, he contents himself with merely applying the relevant Thomistic label as a prescription for the various existential ailments. For example, in his section on Kierkegaard, he says:

> . . . Luther turned against Aristotle and the scholastics as Kierkegaard turned against Hegel and Schleiermacher. In Thomistic scholasticism, on the other hand, the organic relationship between faith and reason, theology and philosophy, supernature and nature is duly recognized and firmly established, and both the transcendence of faith and the relative autonomy of reason are safeguarded. Thomism, then, strikes a middle path between the extremes of an integral supranaturalism (fideism) and an integral rationalism (gnosticism) (p. 37).

Of course, the location of the middle path seems to vary with the point of view of the observer, and Dr. Reinhardt undoubtedly could present a persuasive case in defense of his, but in this book he does not do so. It would probably have been helpful to most readers if he had eliminated the Thomistic labels and contented himself with exposition, although on occasion his Thomistic sallies are suggestive for further lines of thought. However, my impression is that, on one level, Dr. Reinhardt intended this work to be a "Thomistic Guide to Existentialism," wherein he expounds the thought of the existentialists, indicates the points at which they are vulnerable to Thomistic argument, and relies on his Thomist readers to fill them in.

In his treatment of Heidegger's views on truth (pp. 139 ff.), based on Heidegger's brilliant essay, "On the Essence of Truth," he lets his concern for the Thomist position interfere with the presentation of Heidegger's ideas so much, that the latter hardly emerge. This mistreatment probably was due to Dr. Reinhardt's eagerness to refute Heidegger's criticism of the scholastic dictum that "truth expresses an adequate assimilation of the intellect and the thing."

Furthermore, the author's Thomism also produces blind spots with regard to some vital existential insights, for example, Kierkegaard's position on history and faith. Kierkegaard sees that, in Christianity, man's salvation is intimately bound up with the appearance in history

of Jesus, the suffering Messiah. Yet the only accounts we have of this historical event are the Gospel accounts, which are, from a *strictly historical* point of view, only verifiable on the same grounds as other historical data. Thus, the historical existence of the divine Savior of Christian faith is rooted in all the doubts and uncertainties of historical data, a rooting which is inadequate to the passionate certainty which faith demands. Therefore, Kierkegaard holds that Christian faith must exist in a dialectical tension which cannot be eased by any attempt at historical verification of the truths of Christianity. This is one of the points that calls forth his famous "leap of faith." To this, Dr. Reinhardt says that Kierkegaard is ". . . unaware of the fact that historical reliability rests qualitatively on the authority of 'the witness' and that in the case of the scriptual accounts the authority of the witness constitutes a motive of credibility." This is very comforting to Dr. Reinhardt, but it completely misses the point that the authority of "the witness" is based on the same dialectic between the realms of history and faith, as is the Gospel account itself.

It is the neatness of such Thomistic formulae that lead many who are inclined toward existentialist perspectives to challenge Dr. Reinhardt's statement placing Thomism on a middle path between supranaturalism and rationalism. For existentialism cannot be expounded simply in terms of doctrines, as Dr. Reinhardt implies, since it is also a matter of attitude, the attitude of passion. The existentialists find that life eludes formulae. They come by truth the hard way, are passionately concerned with it, and find the neatness of the system builders an affront.

There can be little argument with the thinkers Dr. Reinhardt has included in his book, but it is distressing to note that in this excellent book, as in other works in the field, Martin Buber is ignored. Yet, Buber's magnum opus, *I and Thou,* appeared in 1923, before the other major works of twentieth century existentialism. Furthermore, his two major categories, I-Thou and I-It, representing the two basic human attitudes of relatedness and objectivization, have become standard existential, and almost standard philosophical, terminology. Yet, despite the fact that his development of these categories and their implications is far more profound than that of many other existentialists, he remains uncredited in most books about the movement.

Certainly, it is especially unfair to consider Marcel at such length without mentioning Buber, when so many of the ideas to be found in

Buber's works are central to Marcel's thought, and are treated, whether as a result of direct influence of one upon the other or otherwise, in similar fashion by both men. However, this flaw, and the others mentioned, are but minor detractions from what is one of the clearest and most useful presentations of existentialism to date.

MALCOM L. DIAMOND

Princeton University

*In This Name.* By CLAUDE WELCH. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952. xiii, 318 pp. $3.50.

Here is evidence that our contemporary theological renaissance is beginning to come to full development, for, as Professor Welch himself points out, there is a logical sequence which leads from the concern with "the tragic aspects of human existence, of precariousness of man's achievements, and of the depth of sin," through soteriology, to Christology and so finally to the nature of God. To deal with the Trinity is to deal with one of the great themes of classical theology, but, as Professor Welch makes clear, it was a theme generally neglected and depreciated in the nineteenth century and, indeed, until recently. One could scarcely wish for a more brilliant guide through contemporary Trinitarian discussion than Professor Welch here provides for us. He is obviously the master of his material, classifying and analyzing it with skill and lucidity, and pointing us ahead in a final chapter on "The Direction of Trinitarian Reconstruction."

Five main tendencies are distinguished in contemporary Trinitarian thought, three of them representing continuations of nineteenth century patterns, and two of them representing lines of thought directly related to the new theological movements:

1. The "liberal" tradition, which, while often conceding the usefulness of the doctrine (not always, as we find in McGiffert, D. C. McIntosh, and John Baillie), would deny that it is essential or indispensable. Here is included what is called the "monarchian" tendency, which affirms that the Trinity is only a form of Divine manifestation or that it reflects only three aspects or attributes of the Divine nature, three distinctions within the content of Divine action. Emil Brunner's Trinitarian discussion is treated under this heading, and Welch shows (to this reviewer

conclusively) that the heart of Brunner's thought on this point is the very dubious assertion that "wrath" and "love" represent clear distinctions within the godhead which correspond to the persons of Father and Son. The conclusion is that damnation is the work of the Father and redemption the work of the Son! Surely St. Augustine's dictum is important here: *Opera trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*—the outward works of the Trinity are indivisible, i.e., cannot be parceled out among the Persons. Brunner's Trinity betrays serious schizoid tendencies!

2. Philosophical Trinitarianism, which attempts after the manner of Hegel to justify the Trinity in terms of a philosophical or metaphysical analysis of the nature of God. Welch's illustrations here are not particularly apt—Lionel Thornton and Dorothy Sayers. He confesses apologetically that both of them "explicitly affirm the revelational basis for the doctrine" and admits that his criticism is really directed to their use of analogies which are "premature" until a thorough-going restatement of the root of the doctrine in Christian faith has been undertaken.

3. The Trinity in authoritarian Christianity, which include the recent discussion of this subject in Fundamentalist Protestant circles and among Roman Catholics. The former do not seem to make the Trinity central in their systems, being preoccupied with other matters such as the blood-atonement and the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. Roman Catholic thought is discussed with extraordinary sympathy, and we are introduced to a rich and subtle body of material. Welch's chief criticism is that the basis of the doctrine is laid in a series of authoritarian dogmatic propositions, rather than in the historical events of the temporal sending of the Son and the giving of the Spirit. The latter is the method of contemporary Protestant theology, and is basic for Welch's own reconstruction.

4. The Trinity as synthesis, in which the basis of the doctrine is judged to be the necessity for reconciling incompatible aspects of Christian revelation on the one hand with rational thought and/or Jewish monotheism on the other. Whale, Micklem, and Pittenger work out this synthesis along the familiar lines of psychological analogy; Hodgson and Lowry work it out along lines of a social analogy. Welch is convinced that this approach to the doctrine of the Trinity results in its being relegated to the position of a derivative doctrine, a mere defensive formulation which, no matter how necessary or inevitable it is held to be, can never rank as a first principle of Christian theology.

5. The Trinity as the immediate implication of revelation, in which the basis of the doctrine is involved in the very meaning of the concept of revelation itself. The exemplar here is Karl Barth. The statement, "God reveals Himself" (and, of course, for Barth, the revealing is thought of primarily in connection with Jesus Christ) can be analyzed as follows: ". . . it is *God* who reveals Himself, that He reveals Himself *through* Himself, and that He reveals *Himself.*" Three concepts are involved, says Barth, in this affirmation of revelation: Revealer, Revelation, Revealedness, and their identity must be affirmed. To cite another passage:

> Revelation means first God's *self-unveiling,* His becoming a Thou to men . . . , (but) revelation is revelation of the God who according to His nature cannot be unveiled to man. . . . God speaks *in the form;* He remains free in it; the form does not take His place. . . . Finally the self-unveiling is *imparted to men.* . . . This is *God's* revealedness, *His* being imparted to men so that their experiences and concepts are able to follow and respond to Him (p. 170).

Welch's own reconstruction is too many-sided and rich to be summarized here. He takes his stand with Barth and proceeds to evaluate and criticize the other tendencies in contemporary Trinitarian thought from that point of view. His strictures, especially against the "social Trinity," are brilliant and telling and will require serious answers. To this reviewer's gratification (for we all have our pet analogies for the Trinity and this was mine) Miss Sayers' analogy of the creative artist is restored to favor, provided it is not conceived of as "proof or corroboration" but only as "trinitarian philosophizing."

This is an immensely rewarding study and it ought to have high priority for anyone working in contemporary theology from the point of view of the primacy of revelation.

John M. Krumm

Columbia University

*What Present-Day Theologians Are Thinking.* By Daniel Day Williams. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952. 158 pp. $2.00.

When books are written with the express purpose of disseminating the problems and achievements of contemporary theology "outward" to the layman, perhaps no one stands to learn more from them than do theologians themselves. Here they have an opportunity to see them-

selves as others see them—to discover how their own technical jargon sounds when transposed into everyday discourse, and so to find out whether they have, in fact, been dealing with real-life problems of human beings, or whether, instead, they have merely been bemusing themselves with a private picture puzzle whose pieces they themselves have supplied.

Daniel Day Williams' *What Present-Day Theologians Are Thinking* provides just such a mirror in which the theologian may be seen by both himself and the layman. As succinct in exposition as it is comprehensive in scope, the book presents in their twentieth century context the principal problems which have perennially beset theology: What is the relation between Christian "truth" and the "truth" of other disciples? How can Christian ethical principles be made applicable to a secular society? What are the metaphysical implications of the belief in a Christ who is literally an agent in history? How can the conception of the Church as a new creation steer a middle course between an exclusive complacency, on the one hand, and a definition so broad as to include everything (and therefore nothing), on the other?

As the author lucidly indicates the ways in which these questions have been met by practically every theological writer, the layman will hardly escape the conclusion that more sincere and creative thought is being devoted to these issues now than at any time for several centuries —that we do indeed live in a theological renaissance. Whether he will be equally convinced of the relevance of these matters to his own day-to-day living is less certain. And until he is, the theologian must simply conclude that the cutting edge of the theological revival is not yet sharp enough.

At several points, at least, the general reader may have serious reservations. The first concerns Christian love, *agape*. If, as is often maintained, the Christian is to love his neighbor *instead* of himself—if love becomes more "exalted" the more unpalatable it is, then the layman can hardly be blamed for turning a more receptive ear to the psychiatrist, who knows so thoroughly the evils of self-negation. Secondly, he may be justly perturbed by the variety of interpretations, not always reconcilable with one another, which can apparently be called Christian. Until some firm footing is established from which to test these differing positions, Protestantism will seem rightly subject to the Roman Catholic charge that it can take no stand, but finally capitulates to relativism.

In the meantime, one may question the wisdom of actually justifying such an embarrassing situation on the ground that Christian humility forbids the assertion of any one view above another. At this point, the theologian could borrow some of the common sense which knows that two incompatible propositions cannot be equally correct.

Finally, the lay reader may question the widespread and highly uncritical estimation of Grünewald's painting of the crucifixion in the Isenheim Altar as a classic expression of a Christian view of life. The theological vogue which this painting currently enjoys is difficult to reconcile with its evident gnostic aspects, which become all the more apparent in conjunction with its companion painting, the resurrection.

The book thus renders a multiple service. To the layman it offers an expert outline of contemporary theological developments. For the theologian, it not only subjects his undertaking to a wider range of testing than the specialized professional field, but by its comprehensive bird's-eye-view it helps him to get a more adequate view of the whole forest, and not just the trees.

E. La B. Cherbonnier

Barnard College

*The Theology of Paul Tillich*. Edited by Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952. xiv, 370 pp. $5.50.

This admirable symposium of fourteen critical interpretations of the work of Paul Tillich is followed by Tillich's reply to his interpreters' criticisms and preceded by the best possible kind of introduction to such a book, a *Lebensbild* by himself. Students of Tillich will be grateful, too, for the bibliography of the books and articles written by him in the course of the forty-three years ending in the spring of 1952.

Tillich is not alone among great theologians in evoking both ardent admiration and sharp criticism, and his work lends itself to the kind of commentary that the editors have very ably assembled. The book is to become the first of a collection entitled "The Library of Living Theology," a title inspired by Schilpp's "Library of Living Philosophers." Surely the adaptation is unfortunate however. Theologians may be interesting, living or dead; but no one would want dead theology for a book let alone a library, while, on the other hand, living theology would

include, I hope, St. Paul. Either the adjective "living" is redundant, or for the noun "theology" we should have "theologians." The latter is evidently the alternative that is intended, and it is to be welcomed.

The contributions, all valuable, vary in quality and style. "Tillich's Doctrine of God," by Charles Hortshorne, is both important and enjoyable, eliciting a masterly reply from Tillich in which he maintains the symbolic character of every attribute of God as a consequence of his interpretation of the classical doctrine that the divine attributes are identical in Him. Reinhold Niebuhr sees that Tillich's greatness lies in his exploration of the boundary between metaphysics and theology, a task that Niebuhr likens to that of a tightrope walker, whose performance, even though involving a few mishaps, fascinates those of us who have no gift for doing it at all. He is critical of Tillich's doctrine of the Fall, likened to that of Origen, and of his notion of "ecstatic reason," which Niebuhr contrasts with the faith of the Bible. In a contribution at once appreciative and acutely critical, Dorothy Emmet asks what the "objective reason" is, and Tillich, who believes that the relation between "mind" and "reality," is "the basic epistemological problem," cannot be said to answer her satisfactorily.

Theodor Siegfried, writing from Marburg on "The Significance of Paul Tillich's Theology for the German Situation," urges Roman Catholics, who in continental Europe have for some time tended to regard Barth as the spokesman of Protestantism, to take Tillich's thought fully into account. He suggests that they think they can find in Rome all they can find in Barth, only better, and Tillich's doctrine that "grace appears at the boundary line of existence in the moment in which man is delivered to nothingness and despair" could show them a more Protestant mode of thought. (Is it? Dr. Johnson, misquoting Camden, may have thought it was very Protestant to find mercy between the stirrup and the ground, but St. Augustine had already found it *inter pontem et fontem.*) Nels Ferré gives an account of Tillich's view of the Church, and he and others raise questions about the problem of the historic Jesus. Tillich is so impressed by the clarity of A. T. Mollegen's contribution, in its treatment of the latter point, that he refers his critics to it. R. H. Daubey looks in his own Anglican tradition for counterparts to the Lutheran Tillich's insights about "structure" and "pattern of liturgy." What he has to say on Tillich's "*Gestalt* of Grace" may be helpful to some of us whose intellectual roots are not German.

No chapter is more readable than that of John H. Randall, Jr. on Tillich's ontology: such warmth of sympathy gives fire to criticism. Looking as a philosopher at Tillich, Randall finds him a philosopher rather than a prophet. George Thomas, whose viewpoint is more theological, finds Tillich's statement of the Christian message weakened by "an impersonal philosophy alien to . . . Christianity." In an enquiry into Tillich's role in contemporary theology, Walter Horton suggests that Tillich, than whom no Protestant thinker is more aware of the indispensability of what Catholicism most treasures, could contribute much to the ecumenical movement, where Barthians predominate too much among the Protestants. James Luther Adams recognizes Tillich's interpretation of history to be the most substantial in Protestantism. Tillich once preferred an appointment at Dresden to one at Giessen because it offered him closer touch with the arts. Not all theologians have so well understood the relevance of art to religion, and Theodore Greene's chapter on secular culture is much in point. Tillich's impatience of otherworldliness posing as Christianity is always welcome. It is this *Alltäglichkeit* of Christianity that gives rise to the doctrine of the *kairos,* in which the secular struggle for social justice is invested with fully religious dignity. Eduard Heimann finds that Tillich's "vision of the socialist theonomy is immaculate," while his objections to Tillich's understanding of Marxism elicits a defence by Tillich of his own position. Christians must, of course, assert socialism over so-called individualism and so-called communism; but Tillich is willing to see even in Marx (the early Marx, at least) much that can be combined with Christianity. Not all Christians will follow him here. None is more aware, at any rate, that only those bespattered with the mud of politics dare claim profession of the Christian way. At the end of a very helpful discussion of Tillich's doctrine of man, David Roberts notes the curious combination of flexible vitality and abstruse schematization in his colleague's thinking: "Tillich, like God, manages to engulf distinctions without blurring them."

It is, however, the incomprehensibility of God's ways that makes those of us whose *fides quaerens intellectum* is greater than our mystical vision, desire interpreters nearer our own level. Even so appreciative an admirer as Randall has to regret the Germanic imprecision of Tillich's style, and defend him by quoting the later Whitehead's "Exactness is a fake." But, unlike many contemporary philosophers, Tillich is talking

about extremely important subjects. No commentary could dispel all the difficulties, but this book, of whose scope only the most slender hints can be given here, will clarify much. It also dramatically shows how relevant to contemporary thought are the questions so abundantly posed in reading the work of this unusual mind.

GEDDES MACGREGOR

Bryn Mawr College

*Rehearsals of Discomposure*. By NATHAN A. SCOTT, JR. New York: King's Crown Press, Columbia University, 1952. xv, 294 pp. $4.00.

This essay is a most sensitive, illuminating, and wise study of the spiritual tensions of our times, as reflected in the writings of Franz Kafka, Ignazio Silone, D. H. Lawrence, and T. S. Eliot. In perspective and insight, in sympathetic understanding and forthright utterance, in scholarship and style, it is, in my judgment, absolutely first rate. I know that this is very high praise, but nothing less would express my judicious estimate of this remarkable volume.

Mr. Scott rightly believes that literature is "not merely 'significant form' " but, "fundamentally, a response to experience . . . that is expressive of a coherent, if not systematically articulated, vision of human life" (pp. vii-viii). His basic assumption, "that the true artist does not misunderstand the meaning of the period in which he lives and that his art is therefore always, beyond its purely aesthetic intentions, an act of haruspicy" (p. 179), is amply justified by his analysis of what his four authors "tell us about ourselves, about contemporary man in the broad mass—from the standpoint of our special category" (p. 179). This special category is that of man's alienation—his spiritual isolation and estrangement—and his search, now hopeful and now more or less hopeless, for reconciliation and redemption. This, he argues most convincingly, is the central theme of each of the literary expressions of "discomposure" here "rehearsed," however importantly they differ from one another in approach and final conclusion.

Silone, to be sure, is characteristically concerned with the public frustrations of the socially excommunicated individual, and Lawrence is chiefly preoccupied with the self-encystment of the private ego, as it is apprehended in the sexual relation; while Kafka and Eliot are primarily interested in the estrangement of modern man from the sources of religious consolation. But they are all at one

in dramatizing the plight of the contemporary man or woman. . . . Their characters inhabit a world in which, above all else, they are marked by the conditions of moral and spiritual isolation, and so they are, as they weave their art out of the myriad ambiguities of contemporary existence, in the deepest sense, spiritual historians of our period (p. 247).

Mr. Scott devotes a long chapter to each of his authors. He is concerned to make clear, with many happy quotations from their writings and from critical commentaries, how each labors this common theme but, no less, how each also exemplifies, in his own unique way, a distinctive type of basic interest, approach, and creative venture.

Most notable in Kafka is "the sense of cosmic exile," that is, the profound conviction that man, because of his inescapable finitude, is forever unable to achieve significant knowledge of, or relation to, the Deity who is, in fact, man's only ultimate hope. This radical frustration dooms man, in turn, to alienation from his fellowmen, both individually and corporately. He is thus left hanging midway between heaven and earth, pulled and blocked in both directions. "If he heads . . . for the earth, his heavenly collar throttles him, and if he heads for Heaven, his earthly one does the same" (p. 42, quoted from Kafka).

Silone exemplifies a "revolutionary sensibility." He locates man's ultimate predicament not in his metaphysical finitude but in his moral culpability and in his human destiny—in man's failure, on the one hand, to recognize the ultimacy of *agape,* and, on the other, in the inevitable isolation, in our sick society, of any rare individual who has experienced authentic conversion and has become persuaded that society's only hope lies in "a reorientation of the political task in the light of Christian principles, . . . the transmutation of the revolutionary act . . . into an act of brotherhood, of love and friendship . . ." (p. 111).

Lawrence is labelled "chartist of the via mystica." He is a deeply pessimistic romantic who finds man's ultimate tragedy in the particularity which condemns him to perpetual ontological solitude—a solitude not broken even by sexual ecstasy. Man's estrangement, both from his fellowmen and from the *mysterium tremendum* is, Lawrence believes, merely aggravated, not created, by our industrialized and intellectualized society; but his only hope, if it is a hope, awaits his destruction of the "false, inorganic connections" which are destroying him, and his re-establishment of "living connections, with the cosmos, the sun and earth, with mankind and nation and family. Start with the sun, and the

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rest will slowly, slowly happen" (p. 177). Thus Lawrence, the very un-Christian naturalist and "limbic saint," "whose despair has been so profound that, in hovering on the verge of prayer, it has been evocative of faith . . ." (p. 177).

Eliot is selected as the fourth author to be studied because he has excelled not only in masterly diagnosis of our "waste land" but in imaginative expression of our Christian faith and in "contemporary synthesis." Using the method of "compression" (rather than "expansion," as did Joyce), he has been able to bring home to us, not in conceptual dogma but in fresh imagery, man's ineradicable sense of spiritual mystery and the validity of religious "contemplative emotion" (p. 229); the value of suffering, accepted as the *via negativa* to a "deeper communion"; the actuality of the Incarnation; and the "profound cultural and political relevance" of "regeneration" (p. 241), conceived of in definitively Christian terms. Mr. Scott's own acceptance of this Christian perspective is very clear in his Conclusion, where Silone is found, as it were, to have answered Lawrence, Kafka to have corrected Silone, and both Silone, the "heroic humanist" full of *agape,* and Eliot, more clearly aware of its nature and import, to have exhibited the "sentimentality" of Lawrence's and Kafka's ultimate pessimisms.

I cannot urge the reader too strongly to study this rich and subtle essay with care, and I cannot refrain from urging its author to tackle, in another essay, three other authors worthy of his mettle—Dostoyevsky, Proust, and Joyce. A comparable study of these giants would indeed be a cultural and literary event of major importance.

THEODORE M. GREENE

Yale University

# BOOK NOTES

*Volksglaube im Pharaonenreich.* By Günther Roeder. Stuttgart: W. Spemann Verlag, 1952. 273 pp. DM 17.80.

This book is intended for the general reader and appears in a publisher's series entitled "Völkerglaube" which surveys a number of ancient or primitive religions. The author is a veteran Egyptologist and one whose interest in Egyptian religion is of long standing. Hence he writes from a thorough acquaintance with the sources. In order to make the treatment as non-technical as possible, the author has abstained from identifying his source-material and from entering into arguments about the interpretations offered. Instead he provides a narrative-descriptive reconstruction of Egyptian religion. The account emphasizes popular religion and skims lightly over court religion and theology. To take Egyptian religion from the angle of popular beliefs makes very good sense in a book of this type, the more so since the theological aspects have been dealt with in a full-scale study by Hermann Kees *(Der Götterglaube im alten Ägypten,* 1941). By and large the book goes over the same ground that was covered in Adolf Erman's pioneer study, *Die Religion der Ägypter.* Its most distinctive feature is the fairly detailed treatment of the beliefs and practices which prevailed in the various sections of the Nile Valley and which are symbolized by the means and standards of the different nomes. This chapter of religious geography is the longest in the book and contains much that can be of use to the scholar. Other chapters deal with the major themes of Egyptian religion, such as: the cosmic gods and their cult; the afterlife and burial practices; and the role of religion in daily life. The final chapter sketches the effects of Egyptian religion on neighboring countries, and the transition from paganism to Christianity. The narrative is enlivened by numerous line drawings, maps, and photographs.

Miriam Lichtheim

*The Archeology of World Religions.* By Jack Finegan. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952. xl, 599 pp. $10.00.

An adequate critical review of this magnificently produced book would require the collaboration of ten specialists or more. Mr. Finegan has here presented, with quotations and many excellent photographic illustrations, a panoramic view of the history of living religions outside the Judeo-Christian tradition. Although in each case the account is brought down cursorily to the present, the author's primary emphasis is placed upon the earlier history and cultural background of these religions as brought to light in archeological and epigraphic studies. In an earlier book, *Light from the Ancient Past* (1946), Mr. Finegan presented a similar survey of the contributions of archeology to our knowledge of the backgrounds of Judaism and Christianity.

*The Archeology of World Religions* is an invaluable source and reference book for teachers and advance students of religion. It is also a fascinating account of religions outside of the western tradition for the patient lay reader. Although, necessarily, some sections bog down in the enormous amount of detail that is presented, Mr. Finegan has been on the whole remarkably successful in transforming technical information into a readable story. And, even for those who can read, the more than 250 illustrations alone would be worth the price of the book.

J. L. B.

*The Rabbinic Mind.* By Max Kadushin. New York: Bloch Publishing Company; The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1952. xvii, 394 pp. $5.00.

Rabbi Kadushin has carried on for many years a highly individual and most interesting approach to the study of the rabbinic literature of Judaism. He has been concerned to define and analyze the nature of what he has termed the "rabbinic concepts." These rabbinic concepts are not "fully formulated"; they are not expressible in propositional form; there are, however, value-terms that stand for these concepts, particularly in the Haggadic sources. The present study is a continuation of these earlier researches with the special purpose of showing how the rabbinic concepts function in the transmission of social values, in the integration of the self, and in the relation of the self to society.

The value-terms that represent rabbinic concepts are not always present explicitly in the context of rabbinic discussions. They are, rather, as Kadushin puts it, "imbedded in an action or a statement." The term is a generalized version of the central element in the concept; but the concept-in-use, as it were, cannot be limited to the definition of its term. The concepts are, therefore, not merely undefined; they are undefinable. Because they are undefinable, they are flexible; they can "respond to and express the *differentia* of human personalities." But, then, too, the value-term is expanded in meaning by each instance of the concept, whether or not the term is explicitly used, and thus the entire group of concepts forms a realm of significance that is ever-expanding. It is in this way that the concepts, and the terms that represent them, although themselves undefinable, may yet be used to define a culture, to lead an individual to understand his place in that culture, and, finally, to point out to the individual a (culturally acceptable) direction of self-realization. Kadushin generalizes this point beyond the specific rabbinic culture he is chiefly concerned with, by suggesting that "Value-concepts are most likely decisive factors in every civilized society, each society owing its stability and character to such value-concepts. . . ."

An essential aspect of Kadushin's analysis is the differentiation of the rabbinic ideas he is discussing from philosophic theories. The classificatory term that he uses as a distinguishing mark is that rabbinic concepts are "organismic," not philosophic. This is taken to mean that these concepts are not the product of a rational system, logically co-ordinated, but are the product of experience,

integrated, though not systematic, organically interpenetrating though not rationally concatenated. To speak of rabbinic concepts in philosophic terms is, then, to do them violence.

Again, nothing is farther removed from the meaning that is usually associated with the word "mysticism" than the rabbinic thought-world. Yet it is clear that the pervasive sense in rabbinic discussion that the most commonplace of everyday actions is freighted with holiness is an extension to normal experience of the characteristic feeling-tone of mysticism. Because of this, Rabbi Kadushin claims for the rabbinic mind a "normal mysticism." More than anything else, it is this suggestion that clarifies his conception of the nature of the rabbinic concept.

J. L. B.

*Islam in Ethiopia.* By J. Spencer Trimingham. London: Oxford University Press, 1952. xv, 299 pp. 6 maps. $5.00.

In some ways this book is a lengthy appendix to the author's earlier volume on *Islam in the Sudan,* carrying on the story of the penetration of Islam eastward and southward from the Sudan into Abyssinia, whose very mixed and varied tribal population presented an attractive area for Muslim expansion. Unlike the previous volume, however, this book has much less evidence of personal contact, and is rather a compilation from various sources of what is known of the history of Abyssinia, and, in connection therewith, of the coming of Islam to the country and the constant involvement of its peoples with Muslim penetration.

Every student of Islam is familiar with the story of how Muhammad is said to have advised his persecuted followers to seek refuge with the Negus of Abyssinia, where they would be received with kindness, and some may remember the discussion some years ago when there was offered on the market what purported to be the very letter written by Muhammad to the Negus, with even the Prophet's seal attached. What is not so generally known, however, is that for a moment there was danger of Ethiopia becoming a Muslim kingdom, when Lijj Iyasu, the successor to the great Menelik, became a Muslim, divorced his Christian wife and started a *harim* in Muslim fashion, and endeavored to bring the whole land under Islam, his overthrow being the event which paved the way for the present ruler, Hayla Selasse to come presently to the throne.

The peculiar value of this study is that it assemblies in a conveniently accessible form a great deal of information concerning the distribution of Islam in the territories of the kingdom of Ethiopia, its strength among the tribes, the distribution of the various Dervish Orders, the popular saint-worship, as characteristic here as elsewhere in Africa, and much very curious evidence of the survival in Abyssinian Islam of a great many beliefs and practices from the old pagan substratum.

A. J.

*Ibn Khaldun and Tamerlane.* By WALTER J. FISCHEL. Berkeley and Los Angeles: 149 pp. University of California Press, 1952. $2.75.

In the old city of Damascus they will still show you where such and such happened when Timur's Mongols sacked the city in 1401, and they will still take you to the spot on the hillock Qubbat Sayyar from which Timur used to look down on the city he was besieging. It has long been known that while Timur the Lame (Tamerlane), the greatest soldier of the age, was sitting outside Damascus, he was visited by Ibn Khaldun, the greatest historian of the age, for one of the prisoners taken at the sack of the city was a boy of twelve, Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Arabshah, who with his mother was carried off to Samarqand, where he gained an intimate knowledge of Timur and later wrote a *Vitae et rerum gestarum Timuri qui vulgo Tamerlanes dicitur Historia,* in which he tells of Ibn Khaldun's visit. Now, however, as one result of Dr. Fischel's searches in the libraries of Istambul and Cairo, it has become possible to correct and supplement Ibn Arabshah's account of that historic meeting from Ibn Khaldun's own account of it in hitherto unknown chapters of his Autobiography.

Ibn Khaldun had come up to Damascus with the army of Faraj, the Mamluk Sultan of Egypt, and when Faraj decided to abandon Damascus to its fate and return to Cairo, Ibn Khaldun was one of those left behind in the city. When the Qadi Ibn Muflih went out of the now doomed city, along with the Sheikh of the Sufis, to discuss terms of surrender with Timur, he asked them about Ibn Khaldun, whether he was still in the city or had returned with Faraj to Egypt. So the next day Ibn Khaldun had himself let down the wall and went with appropriate presents to pay a visit of respect to the Mongol chieftain. The account of this interview is unusually interesting on several counts. It is the earliest eye-witness account of Timur we have in Arabic and gives a very favorable impression of the conqueror. It also reveals what a pusillanimous old gentleman the famous historian was. Timur seems to have been extremely interested in everything about the western regions of North Africa, for he questioned Ibn Khaldun (who was himself a Maghribi from that area) very closely about it, and sent him back to the city with instructions to write for him an account of it, "of its distant as well as its near-by parts, its mountains and its rivers, its villages and its cities, in such a manner that I might seem actually to see it." This Ibn Khaldun wrote for him to "the equivalent of about twelve quires of half-format," and even speculated about whether certain predictions based by contemporary astrologers on the stars were being fulfilled in the appearance of Tamerlane.

Dr. Fischel has supplemented his translation of the passage from the Autobiography by an elaborate Commentary, elucidating the numerous points of detail in this illuminating contribution to our understanding of the personalities both of the Mongol chief and the Muslim historian.

A. J.

*Avicenna: Scientist and Philosopher. A Millenary Symposion.* Edited by G. M. Wickens. London: Luzac and Co., Ltd., 1952. 128 pp. 15*s*.

Ibn-Sina, known to the western scholastics as Avicenna, was the leading philosopher of the eastern Islamic tradition. By the Mohammedan calendar the millenary of Avicenna's birth occurred two years ago, though by the Christian reckoning this occasion will not be celebrated until 1980. The six chapters comprised in the present volume were delivered as a series of lectures under the auspices of the Faculty of Oriental Languages of the University of Cambridge, early in 1951, by a group of scholars whose diverse fields of study testify to the breadth of Avicenna's influence, not only in the Islamic tradition, but in Hebrew culture, and in the science and philosophy of the western medieval world.

The first lecture, by A. J. Arberry, portrays Avicenna's life and its background of Persian and Mohammedan culture, largely by means of passages translated from his own brief autobiography, and from a biography composed by his disciple, al-Juszani. We are reminded by this material that Avicenna was a man of universal learning and of wide practical experience; he was a first-rate poet, as well as physician, lawyer, scientist, and philosopher.

Dr. J. L. Teicher, University Lecturer in Rabbinics at Cambridge, contributes a second lecture on Avicenna's place in Arabic philosophy. The main theme of this essay, which belies its title, is that Avicenna's basic achievement was that of resolving the Kantian antinomies by redefining time in the Bergsonian sense of *durée*. We are returned to the historical Avicenna in the third chapter, in which Professor Wickens brings out the indigenous aspects of the philosopher's thinking, stressing the part played by the religious and poetical traditions of Persia in keying Avicenna's metaphysical inquiries to the theme of the contrariety of matter and spirit. Professor Wickens stresses the originality of Avicenna's philosophy as a genuine re-thinking of his Greek materials, inspired by Persian and Moslem religious insights, tempered with empiricism, and unified by a profound and original metaphysics.

The influence of Avicenna on medieval Jewish philosophy, and primarily on Maimonides, is examined by Dr. E. I. J. Rosenthal. Here the important problems are those of the relation of divine law to the natural laws of reason and philosophy, and of revelation and prophecy to science. The independence of Maimonides, vis-à-vis Avicenna, is emphasized. Analogous to this essay is the sixth of the series, in which Father Kenelm Foster, O. P. discusses the influence of Avicenna on western scholasticism. The treatment reduces to a brief examination of the grounds on which St. Thomas Aquinas criticized Avicenna, albeit with sympathy, as a disguised Platonist. The much more important Avicennian influence in the scholastic tradition, on St. Albert the Great, and especially on the Franciscan and Scotist schools, is neglected, with appropriate apologies.

As a whole, this little volume is informative, interesting, and well executed by competent scholars. It helps to offset the one-sided view of Avicenna as a mere source of western scholastic philosophy, and presents him as a wise man

of Islam. While written on a popular level, it constitutes a well balanced introduction to the personality, background, and general themes of the philosopher. Bibliographical references, appended to each chapter, indicate the more specialized literature on the subjects treated, and an index of proper names facilitates reference to the book itself.

ERNEST A. MOODY

*Selections from Bayle's Dictionary*. Edited by E. A. BELLER and M. DU P. LEE, JR. Princeton, Conn., Princeton University Press, 1952. xxxiv, 312 pp. $6.00.

One can only take satisfaction in the impulse that has resulted in making some of the best pages of Bayle's great *Dictionary* accessible to contemporary readers. Hitherto the necessity of consulting a multi-volume folio edition in the rare books collection of a metropolitan or college library has prevented nearly everyone from gaining firsthand acquaintance with one of the most influential minds of the modern age. Now, at least the text (or a generous abridgment) of eighteen major articles is available in a single readable volume. The translation is basically that of the 1734-38 English edition, which has been checked with the definitive French edition of Beuchot and somewhat modernized. Sensibly enough, too, the editors have merged the "remarks" (which Bayle ran at the bottom of the page in small type) with the main articles, inserting them in brackets at the appropriate places, and have reduced Bayle's double set of footnotes to a single consecutively numbered series.

It is only at the risk of seeming ungrateful that one ventures to regret the omission of some articles that would have made this volume a more faithful mirror of Bayle's thought and more representative of his manifold interests. That on Aristotle, for example, is indispensable for the study of Bayle's fundamental beliefs about the nature of reality and of scientific inquiry; the article on Anaxagoras is equally interesting for its revelation of the extent to which Bayle was in sympathy with pre-Aristotelian Greek speculation about matter, and "Remark R" contains an attack on the "argument from design" that was very likely taken as a model by Diderot when he wrote his *Letter on the Blind*. These two articles would have done something, in addition, to qualify the too facile dictum of the editors' preface (p. xxxii) that "Bayle was not interested in natural science. . . ."

Another sphere of Bayle's activity that needs more emphasis than these selections provide is his classical scholarship, which probably attracted him nearly as much as biblical criticism and ecclesiastical history. Some indication of his contribution to the historical study of mythology (which Vico was to carry further in the next generation) could have been conveyed by including "Aesop," "Amphytrion," "Europa," "Juno," or "Jupiter."

On the other hand, the reasons for including "Abdas," "Castile, Blanche of," "Knuzen," and "Ruggeri" are obscure, since the themes themselves are of secondary interest, and most of the ideas illustrated are well documented in other articles of the selection. In place of these it would, perhaps, have been desir-

able to increase the variety as well as the significance of the book by including a few more substantial pieces, such as the articles on "Anne" (mother of the Virgin Mary), "Arius," "Arminius," "Arnaud (Anthony)"—important for Bayle's relation to the Jansenist movement.

But perhaps these quibbles should not be taken too seriously, for it is inevitable that opinions will differ on many points of detail, and every admirer of Bayle will have his own ideas about what is most significant or interesting in that vast mine of ideas that was his *Historical and Critical Dictionary*. The main thing is that Bayle can now speak directly to a generation that stands as urgently in need of his lucid, tolerant, humane counsels as did the European world in the shadow of Louis XIV's persecution of the Huguenots.

RALPH H. BOWEN

*Jacob Serenius' Kyrkliga Insats.* By LARS HAGBERG. (Samlingar och Studier till Svenska Kyrkans Historia, No. 28). Stockholm: Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelses Bokförlag, 1952. xxxiv, 444 pp. Kr. 27.

Unique in Lutheran history is the series of strong, capable, learned bishops who gave the Swedish Church its peculiar inner character and made possible its successful confrontation with the government within a State Church relationship. One of that succession was Jacob Serenius (1700-1776), whose ecclesiastical contribution is here described in great detail by Lars Hagberg in one of the monographs of Swedish Church history edited by Hilding Pleijel. From these pages emerges the portrait of an ambitious, autocratic, purposeful character, who devoted himself to the strengthening of the clergy and the defence of the orthodox faith in an age which was beginning to find other intellectual leaders and another more secular faith. Not least interesting is the lifelong influence that a decade in England had upon the Swedish prelate. He seems not to have been impressed so much by the apostolicity of the Anglican succession, but he learned much of its practical power in Church and State. A Swedish-English dictionary, an interest in educational reform, a mercantile policy for his own land, an apologetic for orthodoxy against a growing Deism, these were some of the other products of Serenius' stay in London. Somehow the shadow of his own ambition never quite left Serenius, who saw in himself an exponent of what a leader in the Church should be, but none can deny that this Bishop of Strängnäs was a leader or that he helped shape the Church of his land. Judged by his century he was a great Lord Bishop. Succeeding generations may question whether his should be the standard of churchmanship. In one sentence the author catches the spirit of his subject, "Serenius seemed much less interested in persons as such than in the goals he had set for himself and which he sought to realize by the persons he won as friends" (p. 410). Was this the weakness of the structure he strove to save?

CONRAD BERGENDOFF

*Religion in the Development of American Culture, 1765-1840.* By WILLIAM WARREN SWEET. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952. xiv, 338 pp. $3.50.

Dr. Sweet plans a history of religion in America in four volumes. The first of these, published in 1942, concerned *Religion in Colonial America.* The present volume is the second of the series. The third volume will carry the story to about 1880, and the final volume will move into the twentieth century. Necessarily each volume in this series is sketchy. In selecting his theme, Sweet has excluded questions of doctrinal history and the internal development of religion in America. He has chosen to write of the relation of organized religion to American culture from an entirely external point of view.

Sweet's conception of American history has been deeply affected by the "Turner thesis," and of recent years this thesis has been subject to a great deal of criticism among historians. While this does not necessarily vitiate Sweet's interpretation, it does indicate the need for a cautious and tentative attitude towards his conclusions. So, for example, Sweet declares (p. ix) that "It was in the period covered by this volume that the American churches became predominatly activistic," and he associates this development with the non-conformity of the pioneer personality pattern. But activism was a characteristic of American religion far earlier than this; Jonathan Edwards, a generation earlier, was conducting a losing rear-guard action against activism. One might better make out a case for activism and moralism as the fundamental American heresy, determined by the middle and lower class origin of the American population.

One of the chief difficulties I find with works like this is their multivalent use of the term "religion." Thus Sweet asserts: "Religion may be defined as the ultimate passion which determines men's attitudes, and *so defined,* religion becomes the fundamental history-making force" (p. 313; italics supplied). I pass over the tautology involved in this statement of a religious determinism, interesting as this might be for further analysis, to ask whether one can possibly equate "organized religion," which Sweet in another place declares to be his concern, with this "ultimate passion." Furthermore, for the bulk of this book it is assumed that the organized Christian churches are coextensive with religion, and that "Christian faith" is identical with the organized Christian churches. If any honest and valid account of the place of religion in American culture is ever to be written, it must be founded on a more careful and analytical distinction of terms than Sweet has here manifested.

J. L. B.

*A Revelation of Treasure Hid, Together with Three Important Lectures. I. Concerning Freedom, II. Concerning the Motherland, III. Concerning Justice and Apostolical Canons respecting Baptism.* By APOSTOLOS MAKRAKIS. Translated by D. CUMMINGS. Chicago: The Orthodox Christian Educational Society, 1952. 80 pp.

*The Real Truth concerning Apostolos Makrakis.* By Themistocles Livadeas. Translated by D. Cummings. Chicago: The Orthodox Christian Educational Society, 1952. 230 pp.

These are part of the series of the works of Makrakis. The second book is particularly interesting, for it gives the history of the Makrakis controversy by one of his friends with numerous attacks upon his enemies.

C. A. M.

*Khristove Svitlo v Ukraini* (The Light of Christ in Ukraine). By L. Zhabko-Potapovych. Winnipeg-Chester: The Evangelical-Baptist Brotherhood, 1952. 173 pp.

This is the first volume of a history of the Baptist movement in Ukraine. It is a purely sectarian history written from an extreme point of view. As a result it is of varying quality. Thus the first section on the Christianization of Ukraine and the period before the eighteenth century has little to be said for it. The chapter on the philosopher Skovoroda is extremely fine, and when the author reaches the actual beginnings of the Baptist movement, he gives a mass of information that is not to be found as fully anywhere else.

C. A. M.

*Tolerance et communauté humaine.* (Cahiers de l'actualité religieuse.) Tournai —Paris: Editions Casterman, 1952. 245 pp. 84 fr.

This book is the report of a conference held by a group of Roman-Catholic theologians at La Sarte, Belgium, in 1951, in order to discuss one of today's most burning problems—the problem of tolerance. "Tolerance" is, of course, a key word for the world which is opposed to all kinds of totalitarianism, but it is a very comprehensive word, subject to so many almost contradictory interpretations. What does tolerance mean for a Church founded essentially on authority, claiming to possess the absolute Truth and also the means of its infallible and objective expression? How can it be reconciled with the principle of "extra Ecclesia nulla salus," which leads to an uncompromising proselytism? But, on the other hand, if "tolerance" is a natural and unescapable condition of the political and religious "pluralism" given to the Roman Catholic Church as well as to all other religious groups, it is urgent to find out whether the Church accepts it as a "lesser evil" or as a positive value. And, finally, if the tolerance is thus accepted, how can it be dissociated from the relativism which seems to be its unavoidable presupposition? These are the questions to which the authors try to give theological answers, and certainly here is to be found the originality and the importance of their work. It is neither a pragmatical program for a Church "condemned" to accept tolerance, nor a justification of standards naturally opposed to those of Roman Catholicism. It is a deep and constructive effort to rethink the implications of tolerance in truly theological terms.

The problem is defined and presented in an introductory section by André Molitor ("The Political and Social Pluralism") and Joseph Mascon ("The Religious Pluralism"). There follows an historical investigation intended to rediscover the traditional norms of ecclesiastical teaching on tolerance, by Lucien Cerfaux ("The Situation of the Christian in the World according to the New Testament") and a survey of patristic sources by Louis Bouyer. The third part is entirely devoted to the "doctrinal elaboration," and is, of course, the most important one. In it we find four really remarkable essays: "Tolerance and Collaboration as Philosophical Given, Assumed by Faith," by Albert Dondeyne; "The Freedom of Faith and Civil Tolerance," by Aug. Léonard; "The Rights of Conscience," by Bernard Olivier; and "The Theological Conditions of Pluralism," by the well-known Roman Catholic specialist on ecumenical problems, Yves M. Congar.

This simple enumeration of titles at least indicates the level on which the authors deal with the problem of tolerance. It is impossible to discuss in detail all their arguments, but one has to stress the significant fact that they do not avoid the real difficulties implied in "tolerance" for the Roman Catholic point of view. Neither do they seek to minimize the "variations" of the Papacy in the past. This makes their whole effort a real contribution to one of the most controversial issues of our time, and a good step towards that "constructive tolerance" which is the substance of what they are trying to define.

ALEXANDER SCHMEMANN

*The Faith and Modern Man.* By ROMANO GUARDINI. Translated by CHARLOTTE E. FORSYTH. New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1952. vii, 166 pp. $2.75.

The lesser works of a great writer are often more revealing than his longer studies, for they provide in a nut-shell what is unfolded elsewhere more at length, and this gives them a particularly striking pungency. In the present case Romano Guardini's attention is given to some aspects of the Christian's struggle with the forces of the modern world. Concretely speaking, these are identified—as borne out by the date of the twelve essays of this book, written and spread in pamphlet form during World War II—with the will to power of Nazism. Yet on a more basic level every modern will to power, whether it is that of the proletariat or that of the business man, contradicts the Lordship of Him who said, "I am meek and humble of heart" (cf. p. 46); hence the relevance of the book at the present moment also for American readers.

Romano Guardini does not deny the apostasy of the modern man. This is so obvious a fact that only wishful thinkers can overlook it (how many "good Christians" are not wishful thinkers, is a question that would need pondering over). Yet the reflection which Guardini tentatively suggests makes room for hope:

> As Christianity ceases to appear self-evident, and appears again for what it is, an object of contradiction, the scriptural concept of existence again becomes evident,

namely, that man is being drawn into co-activity with God. As this comes to pass, a new attitude towards the Faith will be called for. . . . Perhaps this concept of the Faith will one day return, Faith meaning again that we learn from God's word that He is acting and that we are to take part in His action (pp. 81 f.).

We are in a period of unbelief, not only because there are unbelievers, but also because believers themselves view their faith as a system of thought or of ethics. They have forgotten that it is also an "awareness of the Holy Spirit at work" (p. 82).

This undercurrent of ideas provides the background of the chapters: "Adoration," "God's Patience," "God's Dominion and Man's Freedom," "The Lordship of Christ," "Providence," "Revelation as History," "Faith as Overcoming," "Faith and Doubt in the Stages of Life," "Dogma," "The Saints," "The Adversary," "Purgatory." The most challenging of them is probably the eighth chapter, on "Faith and Doubt," for its analysis of the doubts that successively occur in the course of life outlines the crises of faith in a serene way, yet with acute psychological insight. "Since faith is life itself . . ., it must undergo repeated crises, crises which concern not merely a single part of man's life, but his whole nature—his mind and all his potentialities" (p. 94). The whole creaturely being is involved therein, and they help to form a Christian belief-ful personality.

Who knows? The phase of atheism which mankind is now undergoing may be required for a purer development of Christianity. What holds true for one's personal growth may also be adequate to the collective witnessing to Christ which is the Church. In final analysis this is the meaning of Guardini's book.

EVA MARIA JUNG

*The Beginning and the End.* By NICOLAS BERDYAEV. Translated by R. M. FRENCH. Harper and Brothers, 1952. vii, 256 pp. $3.50.

To those who had hoped that the latest writings of Nicolas Berdyaev would provide some clarification in his philosophy, some attempt to harmonize its many different strands, this second posthumous work will come as a disappointment. It not only recapitulates a great deal of what its author has said before, but, in fact, accentuates many of the more serious difficulties in his thought.

Perhaps the most serious of these is the uncritical combination of his "personalism" with a thoroughly mystical ontology. Here, as elsewhere, Berdyaev emphatically affirms the primacy of the personal over the general, of freedom and decision over "being," of ethics over ontology. Yet, at the same time, the book endorses more uncritically than any of its predecessors Jacob Boehme's conception of ultimate reality as the abysmal, "meontic" *Ungrund,* in which all distinctions of good and evil, all differentiations of individuality, are swallowed up. By bringing together these two irreconcilable alternatives between

the covers of a single book, the author does, at least, render the indirect service of calling attention to their incompatibility.

In other respects, too, some of the less fortunate tendencies of his earlier books have acquired the proportions of serious difficulties in the present one. Among these are the endless (and sometimes apparently aimless) repetition, the disorganized meandering, and, above all, the highly arbitrary and dogmatic style. It is doubtful whether a single attempt is made to establish a point by reasoning and inference, rather than by declaration and fiat. For these reasons, the book confirms the impression that Berdyaev may indeed be read with profit, if one regards his writings as raising some important issues, but scarcely if one accepts the esoteric dogma which equates the obscure with the profound.

E. La B. Cherbonnier

*Eclipse of God.* By Martin Buber. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952. 192 pp. $2.50.

In this book, Martin Buber amplifies his I-Thou philosophy of personal encounter by applying it critically to a variety of topics and thinkers. The topics considered consist of the relation of religion to philosophy, ethics, psychology, and the general temper of modern thought. The thinkers considered include Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Bergson, Heidegger, Sartre, and Jung.

These essays consist of some of the many lectures Buber delivered at American universities in 1951-1952. At many points, they betray the weakness of published lectures, for many points that are made sketchily and intuitively cannot be followed up by questions addressed to the author, as is the case after a public lecture. Furthermore, it should be noted that those unfamiliar with Buber's thought would find it difficult to follow the argument in any of the talks, as they proceed directly from his "I and Thou" philosophy, and he makes no systematic attempt to state this position in any of the articles.

His declarative style constitutes another limitation; for example, at the *end* of a section in the essay on "Religion and Philosophy," he declares, "In a great act of philosophizing even the finger-tips think—but they no longer feel" (pp. 60 f.). For Buber, this sets the great philosopher apart from a great religious personality, but no attempt is made to establish the grounds for the observation; they are merely indicated, and the statement is not amplified. Thus we must construct for ourselves Buber's probable answer to a criticism which would claim that some philosophers, Spinoza for example, would very well fit his description of the great religious figure.

Having pointed to these difficulties, it remains to be said that the book is extremely suggestive. At many points, this style, whose difficulties inhere in its compactness and brevity, is breathtaking in the brilliance with which it summarizes whole movements and problems in philosophy, as for instance, when he says:

> Philosophy is grounded on the presupposition that one sees the absolute in uni-

versals. In opposition to this, religion, when it has to define itself philosophically, says that it means the covenant of the absolute with the particular, with the concrete. For this reason, the central event of Christian philosophy, the scholastic dispute over the reality or unreality of universals, was in essence a philosophical struggle between religion and philosophy and that is its lasting significance" (pp. 56 f.).

Here we have a great thinker, whose breadth of scholarship and penetration are both of the top rank, ranging over many of the most important philosophical issues of our time.

The reader's interests and philosophical presuppositions will largely determine where he feels that Buber's pithy observations are remarkably fertile and suggestive, and where he finds in them an outrageous and distorted statement of a partial truth.

MALCOLM DIAMOND

*The Person: Or the Significance of Man.* By RALPH TYLER FLEWELLING. Los Angeles: The Ward Ritchie Press, 1952. xii, 339 pp. $4.00.

Professor Flewelling, well known as founder and editor of *The Personalist* and director for many years of the School of Philosophy at the University of Southern California, has written the present volume in response to requests that he reissue his *Creative Personality* published twenty-five years ago. In view of developments during the past quarter-century, he found it desirable to rewrite the book entirely, though no marked changes in his point of view are evident. The book is neither an analytic nor constructive treatment of personality. It is, rather, a kind of testament to the value of the concept which has been the chief concern of Professor Flewelling's life. Thus we are given not simply philosophy but a warm and erudite old philosopher as well. The frequently lyric character of the work is suggested by such chapter titles as "My Strip of Blue," "Two Sparrows for a Farthing," and "Old Worlds for New." Because of this character, the chief value of the book would seem to lie in its many incidental insights. The chapter on friendship is rich in these. And others come when the author pleads for an evolutionary approach to religion which avoids both authoritarianism and careless disregard for old and hardwon values (p. 121).

Flewelling recognizes the frequently divisive nature of religious commitments, but he still contends that religion is our most promising instrument of personal and social integration.

Criticisms are difficult and perhaps not altogether appropriate to the review of a work of this kind, but it does seem that the school-spirit with which Professor Flewelling defends his personalism may be somewhat inconsistent with his own criticism of divisive ideologies. And it may blind him to frequent opportunities for rapprochement with other philosophies. Personalism is, for instance, that form of theism which approaches most closely the methods and values of humanism. Many humanists would disavow mechanism, positivism,

and materialism quite as freely as Professor Flewelling does, but he does not discriminate among those who assume a naturalistic position (p. 160). At the present time it might be profitable to explore and define rather thoroughly the ground which religious liberals hold in common. This should make clearer the nature of their metaphysical divisions and reveal, as well, that they have more to fear from current absolutisms than from one another. The feeling of some that such recent scientific theories as those concerning relativity and indeterminacy do not so easily establish a personalistic metaphysics may well be balanced by an agreement, somewhat wider than Professor Flewelling indicates, upon the value of persons. Even some of the movements in art which he gives as evidence of the rampant anti-personalism of our day (p. 326) may have as their deepest meaning a concern for the person quite as real as his own. Such concern is welcome wherever it is found. It is a worthy contribution of this particular volume.

WILLIAM HENRY HARRIS

*The Psychology of Religion.* By L. W. GRENSTED. New York: Oxford University Press, 1952. 181 pp. $3.00.

This useful book by a former Oxford professor of philosophy and Canon of Liverpool reveals a mind witty and urbane, and liberal in the best sense of the word. The author approaches his vast subject with becoming diffidence, remarking, "there is always a lurking doubt whether religion is a proper subject for psychology at all." The first difficulty is the meaning of the terms themselves, since there is no generally accepted definition of religion, and no "science of psychology" with universal principles and methods. This presents quite a dilemma to the scholar searching for a valid "psychology of religion."

The work begins with a concise survey of the development of modern psychology of religion from Starbuck, Hall, and James, and their followers in the "Descriptive-Psychological School," to Gordon Allport, whose Personalism offers a new approach to the religion of the individual.

With the opening of the twentieth century came the analytical school, with momentous consequences for the psychology of religion. The works of Freud administered a series of shock treatments, with both positive and negative results. He furnished a key to unlock the mysteries revealed by James, but his theory of projection and identification could be used to disprove the existence of an objective God, and his *Future of an Illusion* reduced religion to primitive childsplay. As Canon Grensted puts it: "Freud himself fell into the trap of drawing metaphysical conclusions from psychological data." Thus the old warfare between science and religion was revived, producing negative reactions, so that his genuine contributions to the understanding of religion could not be properly appreciated. But there were a few who saw that Freud's methods could be accepted without his conclusions by means of a different interpretation of his data. Among these was Grensted himself, with his Bampton Lectures, *Psychology and God* (1930).

However, in the author's opinion, "It is probably true to say that the most important developments in the psychology of religion in the last twenty years have been due to Jung" (p. 61). He commends Jung for his determination to avoid the pitfalls of metaphysics, and understands that, when Jung asserts that the "gods" are projections of the archetypes, he is not necessarily denying the possibility of the existence of God. He considers Jung's psychological types especially important for religion and points out how closely extravert and introvert correspond to James's "healthy-minded" and "sick souls." The form which the religious experience takes is also influenced by the predominant psychological function: thinking, feeling, intuition, or sensation. This suggests a line of research which might prove very fruitful.

M. B.

*Homage to Ananda Coomaraswamy.* (A Memorial Volume.) Edited by S. Durai Raja Singam. Kuantan, Malaya: S. Durai Raja Singam, publisher, 1952. xix, 333 pp. $4.00.

This labor of love by which Durai Raja Singam has expressed his devotion to his *guru* consists of more than 100 tributes written by a great variety of persons from both East and West, all of whom had come under the spell of Coomaraswamy's great learning and spiritual power. His was truly a "mana personality," attracting people from diverse walks of life: scholars, artists, philosophers, poets, mystics, government officials, teachers, writers, preachers, and of many nationalities. The book demonstrates his unique position as a living link between two great cultures, Oriental and Occidental, for he was, biologically as well as culturally, a product of both. But it was not Coomaraswamy's great erudition which impressed all these people most; it was his dedication to a lifelong task of synthesizing the highest aspects of these two cultures, first in his own philosophy, and second, in his work of interpretation of East to West. To many of them he was more than teacher in the intellectual sense; he was truly *guru* in the spiritual sense of that word. It is this fact which makes this work especially impressive.

One of the interesting features of the book is the collection of photographs, more than fifty of them, showing Coomaraswamy at various ages, and illustrating the different phases of his life and work.

M. B.

*African Folktales and Sculpture.* Edited by Paul Radin. Photographs selected, and Introduction, by James Johnson Sweeney. (Bollingen Series xxxii.) New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1952. 336 pp. 165 plates. $8.50.

This is, indeed, a very handsome book, but one cannot help feeling that the parts should have been published separately, for the illustrations have little or no bearing on the text by Dr. Radin. The folktales are full of interest and variety and the illustrations beautifully reproduced, though it seems a pity that

so many of them are the old familiar examples, instead of new, unpublished material. But perhaps it is ungrateful to look so elegant a gift horse in the mouth.

*Die Jungfrau und Mutter der Griechischen Religion.* By KARL KERÉNYI. Zürich, Rhein-Verlag, 1952. 79 pp. S. Fr. 8.

Once more the indefatigable Kerényi presents an example of his stimulating and question-raising research, this time a study of Pallas Athene, the most paradoxical of Greek divinities. He finds the answer to this paradox in the strong patriarchal character of Homeric theology, in which the daughter has usurped the normal place of the wife as second in glory to the father. Thus, the matriarchal divinity, Hera, is devalued in favor of the maiden tutelary goddess of a Mycenean acropolis, assimilated into the Olympian pantheon by means of the story of her birth from the head of Zeus. The maternal aspect of the ancient Mediterranean "virgin-mother" as fertility goddess, in the case of Athene, is replaced by the protective aspect; Athene is protectress of her city, of heroes, and of craftsmen, etc.—she is "mother" in a social, rather than in a biological sense.

*Harper's Bible Dictionary.* By MADELEINE S. and J. LANE MILLER. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952. xi, 851 pp. 500 illustrations, 16 maps. $7.95.

This magnificent reference work is the result of six years of hard labor on the part of the authors, with the assistance of a great number of experts in the biblical field. Professor Edwin Lewis of Drew Seminary contributed no less than sixty articles; Professor Robert H. Pfeiffer of Harvard University, six; and so on. The list of those who have helped in various ways reads like a *Who's Who,* and inspires confidence in the scholarship of the undertaking. The use of recent archeological material is especially impressive; 100 line drawings, and 400 photographs, half of which were taken by the authors in the course of some nine journeys to the Near East, enrich the work immeasurably, as do the sixteen beautifully executed maps.

*The Spirit of St. Francis de Sales.* By JEAN PIERRE CAMUS. Ed. and tr. by C. F. KELLEY. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952. xxxi, 249 pp. $3.00.

This work, first published in 1639, consists of conversations and anecdotes recorded by the Saint's closest friend and disciple, the young Bishop of Belley, who makes his hero come to life, as Boswell does for Dr. Johnson. In this abridged edition, the material is arranged under such topics as The Love of God, The Love of Neighbor, Devotion, Prayer, Grace, etc., in order to make it more useful as a book of instruction and devotion. Through its pages shines the radiance of a truly great soul.

*The Exploration of the Inner World.* By ANTON T. BOISEN. 2nd ed. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952. xiii, 322 pp. $4.00.

The first edition of this work appeared in 1936 and was reviewed in this journal in March, 1938. Its reappearance in a new edition is a matter of congratulation to author and publisher, since it still remains, after sixteen years, perhaps the most important book in the field of the psychology of religion since James's *Varieties of Religious Experience.*

*The Stumbling Block.* By FRANÇOIS MAURIAC. New York: Philosophical Library, 1952. 83 pp. $2.75.

Diatribes seem to be the order of the day. In this one an eminent Catholic attacks certain disedifying aspects of his own Church, such as the pharisees "to be found in the following of Leon Bloy," the "snobbery in the great Orders," Catholic anti-Semitism, the tasteless excesses of Mariolatry, the "complicity of our Church with the lowest forms of devotion"—"sentient, pleasure-seeking devotion," the scandal of indulgences, etc. Mauriac describes his feeling toward the Church as "an irritated veneration," but the irritation of "a child in the House," a true son of Mother Church.

*Medieval Philosophy.* By FREDERICK C. COPLESTON. New York: Philosophical Library, 1952. v, 193 pp. $2.75.

This excellent little handbook by the Professor of the History of Philosophy at Heythrop is intended for students with no previous knowledge of the subject, and, hence, avoids technical language as far as possible. In strict historical order it deals with such subjects as origins and character of medieval philosophy, the problem of universals, the growth of scholasticism. Islamic and Jewish philosophy, universities, St. Thomas Aquinas, the Averroists, etc., through Nicholas of Cusa, whom the author regards as a medieval philosopher with respect to the traditional element in his thought, though essentially a "transition-thinker" belonging to the Renaissance.

*Hymns and Human Life.* By ERIK ROUTLEY. New York: Philosophical Library, 1952. xvii, 346 pp. $6.00.

Dr. Routley begins with a challenging quotation: " 'Ere 'e comes, the 'oly 'umbug, 'umming 'is 'ymn," and an honest admission that some people just don't like hymns. But for him, "Hymn singing is the articulation of Christian worship, . . . the most insistent and clamorous of all the ways in which Christian faith and worship makes impact on the world around it. . . . Hymns are the folk-song of the church militant. They are, essentially, the people's music." From there he goes on to give a comprehensive survey of Christian hymnody in its historical setting, told with high spirit and warm feeling for human values.

*Early English Churches in America: 1607-1807.* By STEPHEN P. DORSEY. New York: Oxford University Press, 1952. 206 pp. 118 photographs. $10.00.

Mr. Dorsey's book is a rare combination of various fields of knowledge—church history, political history, and the history of architecture. He confines himself to the "English" churches, i.e., those of the Anglican persuasion, which, in their architectural forms, conditioned by the liturgical requirements of the Book of Common Prayer, differed from the Protestant meeting-house of the same period. The examples chosen are grouped regionally, with separate chapters devoted to Virginia and Maryland, the Carolinas, the Middle States, and New England. The book is altogether a joy, with its beautiful illustrations and readable text.

*Randall Davidson, Archbishop of Canterbury.* By G. K. A. BELL. New York: Oxford University Press, 1952. xxxiv, 1442 pp. $9.00.

In his Preface to this third edition of his massive biography, Bishop Bell seizes the opportunity for "a few general reflections on the development of the office of Archbishop of Canterbury during three primacies from 1903 to 1944." And this is a valuable contribution, for it reveals the extraordinary position of the Primate of an established Church in his dual role of statesman and ecclesiastic. The complexity of the situation is obvious. As Archbishop Lang puts it: "The job is really impossible for one man, yet only one man can do it." Apparently Randall Davidson measured up to its demands remarkably well, with a few glaring exceptions, such as his obtuseness in the matter of the Women's Suffrage movement.

*An Essay on Method.* By C. HILLIS KAISER. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1952. vi, 163 pp. $3.25.

Professor Kaiser's thesis is that the specialization of our educational system makes it impossible for the student to "see life steadily and see it whole." His cure for this defect is a rather abstract system of "ideal definitions" which must "establish the exact boundaries between our fundamental disciplines [art, science, philosophy, and religion] and define the relation of each discipline to the others." His restrictive definition of religion as "a practical discipline, that is, one does [*sic*] religion for the sake of an ultimate moral perfection of the self" seems somewhat less than "ideal," because so very incomplete.

# AMONG THE PERIODICALS

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